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This dissertation is a stylistic and contextual analysis of Thomas Jennefelt's "Villarosa sariaidi." The composer asserts that his work draws influence from the Baroque, American minimalism, and the Swedish choral tradition, and that assertion will be evaluated through analysis. Analysis is preceded by an historical overview of the development of choral singing in Sweden and brief biographical information about the composer. Then, influences of the Baroque and specifically the opening chorus of Bach's *St. John Passion* are explored and commonalities among those influences outlined. An assessment of the work's homage to the Swedish choral tradition follows, utilizing criteria set forth by Lennart Reimers. Finally, a concluding discussion evaluates whether the work, given its intimate connections to Swedish choral culture, can be considered patently Swedish.

SOCIOCULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND MUSICAL AMALGAM IN
THOMAS JENNEFELT'S "VILLAROSA SARIALDI"

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Jennefelt (b. 1954), contemporary Swedish composer and former member of the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, has proven himself an important voice of postmodernism in choral composition. His *Villarosa Sequences* (1993-2001) are a choral cycle of seven movements--four for mixed choir, one each for men's and women's voices, and a central solo movement for soprano. The works are of great interest, not only for their post-modern eclecticism, but also for their representative distillation of the various extra-musical influences found in Swedish choral culture. Jennefelt has remarked that these works find inspiration in American minimalism, the Baroque, and the Swedish choral tradition, the assertion of which calls for further examination.

The primary aim of this document is to examine the third movement of the *Sequences*, "Villarosa sarialdi," in light of its various sociocultural, historical, and musical influences, with the ultimate purpose of revealing the intimate connection it has with those influences—in short, to display that this movement could only be a product of the long tradition of *a cappella* choral singing at the highest level in Sweden.¹ The study will involve a relevant review of the historical development of choral singing in Sweden,

¹ Each of the *Sequences* is representative of the influences mentioned above; however, only "Villarosa sarialdi" will be addressed in order to suit the boundaries of this study.

a discussion of the various sociocultural elements as submitted by Reimers and Sparks² that directly influence the *Sequences*, and an inspection of the pedagogical tenets and aesthetics of choral singing in Sweden that contributed to the gestation of such a work and its proper execution. Each of the elements will form a collective rubric by which the piece will be analyzed and evaluated.

The importance of this study is derived from the unique set of circumstances that led to the high level of choral singing in Sweden, and a desire to explore how those circumstances affected the composition of a specific work from the choral repertoire. That Swedish choirs and choral conductors have been among the most respected in the world, especially in the years following the Second World War, is quite well understood, as is that the work of Eric Ericson (b. 1918) and the Swedish Radio Choir is of special import in that development. Due to the international exposure of Swedish choral singing and repertoire after the War, it is sometimes assumed, particularly among those outside the Swedish tradition, that there is a choral “miracle” of sorts afoot.

Indeed, the mid-twentieth-century Swedish sound, as promulgated by Ericson, with its strict emphasis on purity of intonation and evenness of tone and register, was in particular contrast to the fuller, more soloistic production perpetuated in the American Westminster Choir tradition and in other European regions, as well.³ Lennart Reimers, in

² Lennart Reimers and Richard Sparks are two leading scholars on the subject of the development of choral singing in Sweden. The work of Ingrid Leibbrandt is also of import.

³ Alan Zabriskie, in his “Evolution of the Choral Sound of the St. Olaf Choir and the Westminster Choir” (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010), outlines the history of each institution’s choral aesthetic. According to his research, the Westminster

his “The Story Behind the Swedish ‘Choral Miracle,’” relates accounts of flabbergasted audiences around the world, in whose reactions are revealed assumptions of professional training in choirs that would by some criteria be considered amateur, and assumptions of singular prominence when a particular Swedish choir might be one among many of equal artistic prowess.⁴

As miraculous and extraordinary the quality of Swedish choral singing may have seemed to post-War audiences, its development was not a clandestine or inexplicable one. Ericson remarks that the term miracle “should certainly have quotation marks,” noting that the development of choral singing in Sweden was “extraordinarily logical” as a result of a long-standing song tradition, Worker’s Movements, and singing in the Free Church.⁵ Reimers contends that Swedish choral development was a “crystallization of various historical, cultural, and national traditions...*primarily*...between the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th.”⁶ In particular, the development of mixed a cappella singing in Sweden is attributed to several factors, including: the development of

tradition, especially after its relocation to Princeton, became one of soloist-oriented choral singing as a reaction to the needs of orchestral literature. The St. Olaf tradition, on the other hand, originated from a German model of blend under F. Melius Christiansen, and would more closely resemble that of the Swedish tradition. An outline of each aesthetic’s development is found on p. 102 of Zabriskie’s work.

⁴ Lennart Reimers, “A *Cappella*: The Story Behind the Swedish ‘Choral Miracle,’” in *Choral Music Perspectives*, ed. Lennart Reimers and Bo Wallner (Uppsala: Almqvist och Wiksell Tryckeri, 1993), 139-140.

⁵ Ingrid Leibbrandt. *On the Road to Paradise: A Journey through Modern Swedish Choral Music with Lars Edlund, Eric Ericson, Ingvar Lidholm, and Bo Wallner* (Stockholm: KMH Förlaget, 2004), 71.

⁶ Reimers, “A *Cappella*,” 141.

professional training in music at institutions like the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and the Royal Opera, the increased role of amateurs in choral singing, the close relationship between the Church and schools, Swedish national romanticism and popular movements, both of which utilized choral singing as a medium for expression, and the importance of the rediscovery of pre-classical choral music from which developed the a cappella tradition.⁷ Additionally, Richard Sparks, in his *The Swedish Choral Miracle: Swedish A Cappella Music Since 1945*, complements Reimer's submission with elements of his own: six endemic qualities that have produced an artistic environment highly fecund for the development of a cappella works and choral singing. He posits that the centralization of artistic activity in Stockholm, the development of the chamber choir, the connection between choral conductors and composers of choral music, the direct experience of composers with choral music, exposure to the most significant musical developments outside of Sweden, and institutional support have been integral in the development of choral music there.⁸

The various influences above, along with a strong tide of composition in the modern vein that endured for decades, served to elevate choral singing to extraordinary levels from about 1950 onward. A continuum of sorts existed between choir and repertoire—that is, the most gifted choirs were challenged by repertoire to achieve new levels of prowess, and their ever-improving aptitude in turn encouraged the creation of ever-more-difficult repertoire. By the 1980s, however, a wave of post-modern

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Richard Sparks, *The Swedish Choral Miracle; Swedish A Cappella Music Since 1945* (Bynum: Blue Fire Productions, 2000), 20-26.

composition came to dominate, finding inspiration in simplicity and directness of expression. Therefore, it is also necessary to evaluate whether a choral tradition built on modernism could truly have a hand in the composition of “Villarosa sarialdi,” a post-modern, minimalist work.

Chapter Two, Historical Overview: The Swedish Choral “Miracle,” will provide informative historical context appropriate to the topic at hand. Chapter Three, Societal Amalgam, will examine and integrate the various social, cultural, and musical movements that coalesced to produce the eminent choral tradition in Sweden, while Chapter Four will offer Jennefelt’s biographical information and a summary of his compositional style. A conductor’s analysis of “Villarosa sarialdi” will follow in Chapter 5, and an evaluation of the ramifications of that analysis will be rendered in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE SWEDISH CHORAL “MIRACLE”

As in the century that preceded it, the eighteenth century was largely a time of foreign influence in Swedish music. The foregoing tutelage of Charles XI in the 1600s left Swedish artistic development static, and while school choirs had previously been featured at religious services, instrumental music came to dominate the musical landscape as it did throughout Europe. Over the course of the 1700s, however, music became less stationed in the court and noble venues and while music education remained confined to the church schools, public concerts began to appear, particularly in Stockholm, from 1731 onward. As music then became less of a service industry, intellectualism gave way to several studies and historical ventures on the subject of Swedish music, with one landmark example being the *Historik afhandling om musik* (Historic treatise on music, 1773), which also comprehensively inventoried the nations organs.

Still, throughout the course of the eighteenth century, a great number of composers who resided in Sweden were of foreign origin. However, it became apparent that the Swedish nobility and citizens were taking ownership of their musical culture through several cultural developments. The reign of Gustav III (1771-1792) would prove highly important to the establishment of Swedish musical culture proper, as several important musical institutions came into being. The Royal Swedish Academy of Music

opened its doors in 1771, and in 1773, those of the Royal Opera in Stockholm followed suit.⁹

Though most active composers during this period were of foreign descent, Johann Helmich Roman (1694-1758), the “father of Swedish music,” helped establish the legitimacy of Swedish music and the Swedish language as a vehicle of expression in art music. Born into to the Royal Chapel, Roman manned a highly influential post, and his music was performed widely. His *Svenska Mässan* (Swedish Mass, c. 1752), as its name implies, utilizes the Swedish language in place of Latin. The musical style is not Swedish, however, and is based heavily on Händelian style, giving homage to Roman’s European cosmopolitanism.¹⁰

As within much of the western world during this period, democratic political movements rejected centuries of autocratic rule. In Sweden, the assassination of Gustav III in 1792 led to another period of cultural stagnation, as Gustav had been a very active patron of the arts. However, with the adoption of the new constitution in 1809, which greatly reduced the power of the King, the middle class experienced a greater level of autonomy, and again took up the mantle of cultural development. Several music societies were established both within and without Stockholm; Göteborg, Jönköping, and Visby were also home to these promotional institutions. The advent of industrialism resulted in

⁹ Folke Bohlin, et al. "Sweden." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27199> (accessed January 9, 2012).

¹⁰ Ingmar Bengtsson and Bertil H. van Boer. "Roman, Johan Helmich." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23723> (accessed January 10, 2012).

blossoming populations within major cities and towns, which greatly increased the number of concertgoers, and as a result, more concrete standards of performance developed. An era of professionalism was ushered in by these increased expectations, and nascent professional ensembles appeared throughout major cities and towns. Additionally, the Stockholm Conservatory experienced an overhaul in 1866, which led to the standardization of the tenets and curricula of music education.

Composers of the early nineteenth century were largely influenced by the work of the Viennese classicists, but there also developed an interest in the folk music of Sweden, the first efforts of which culminated in the publishing of *Svenska folkvisor* (Swedish Folksongs, 1814-1817). Where instrumental music dominated the previous century, vocal music dominated during these years, mostly in the form of smaller vocal works (lieder). Major composers of this era included Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783-1847), Prince Gustaf of Vasa (1799-1877), Otto Lindblad (1809-1864) and Adolf Lindblad (1801-1878). Through the third quarter of the century, many students chose to seek training outside Sweden, and so was inducted a period of pan-Scandinavian influence, with the musics of Denmark and Norway as leaders of stylistic influence. Additionally, Wagnerian influence swept Sweden as it did much of Europe, but interest in Viennese classicism was not lost entirely. Johann August Söderman (1832-1876), considered one of Sweden's brightest composers of this era, was known for stage music, but his choral works are perhaps the most enduring.¹¹

¹¹ Folke Bohlin, et al., "Sweden."

The late 1800s and early 1900s marked a period of maturation in Sweden's musical culture. A more contemporary concert life developed, bolstered by the construction or reconstruction of concert houses. The works of Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927), Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867-1942), and Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960), both instrumental and vocal, came to dominate the classical music scene, and helped begin the establishment of a patently Swedish sound,¹² which will be discussed later. By the 1920s, however, a strong tide of modernism developed, as younger generations of composers grew tired of the perceived conservatism of Swedish romanticism and the influence of older composers, such as Peterson-Berger, who also happened to be music critics, withered.

The leading influence among modernists was Hilding Rosenberg (1892-1985). Once a student of Stenhammar, he became a devotee of modern techniques upon exposure to serialism in Paris, Berlin, and Dresden.¹³ Göran Bergendal, former Swedish Radio producer and Swedish music scholar, characterizes Rosenberg's ensuing style as a "highly personal, but not particularly original fusions of Palestrina, Bach, the European modernists of the 1920s, and the romanticism of Sibelius."¹⁴ In spite of Rosenberg's influence and that modernism took hold among some other composers, twelve-tone

¹² Folke Bohlin, et al. "Sweden." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27199> (accessed January 9, 2012).

¹³ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 2.

¹⁴ Göran Bergendal, "Post-war Art Music—Some Mainstreams and Profiles," in *Musical Life in Sweden*, ed. Lena Roth (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute, 1987), 23.

works of Webern and Schoenberg were not heard until after World War II,¹⁵ revealing how enduring the former romantic aesthetic had been.

A subsequent generation of composers took a stronger stand against that enduring traditionalism, and formed the *Måndagsgruppen*, or Monday Group, which was established in 1944, and included a number of students between the ages of twenty and thirty, each dissatisfied with the conservative training received at the College of Music in Stockholm. Their meetings involved the discussion of various works of modern bent, including those of Schoenberg, Hindemith, Stravinsky, and Bartók. In addition to the composers and musicologists in this group, there was also Eric Ericson, who would come to dominate the choral scene and train practically every choral conductor in Sweden for decades.¹⁶

A steady movement toward the modernist aesthetic would continue to dominate in the years to follow. Members of the Monday Group moved into powerful positions in both State Radio and college teaching: Ingvar Lidholm (b. 1921) became Professor of Composition at the College of Music in 1965, Sven-Erik Bäck (1919-1994) came to lead the Chamber Music School of the Swedish Radio, and Ericson took the helm of the Radio Choir in 1952 and became choral conductor at the College of Music in 1953. The Radio was a strong channel for the dissemination of new music, particularly through its program *Nutida Musik* (Contemporary Music), which also produced a companion journal, edited

¹⁵ Joakim Tillman, “Ingvar Lindholm och tolvtons-tekniken” (Ph.D. diss., Stockholms Universitet, 1995), 328.

¹⁶ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 3.

by Lidholm and Bo Wallner¹⁷, both members of the Monday Group. This journal helped gain wider acceptance and understanding of musical modernism. In fact, strong criticism of modernist techniques was quelled and all but disappeared by the late 1950s.

Those still firmly rooted in the traditional aesthetic saw this immense influence of the Måndagsgruppen as problematic to the ultimate growth of Swedish music, as anyone who did not achieve or operate in the musical aesthetic pleasing to its members was often dismissed as unworthy and his or her compositions would not be heard. While the Monday Group may have exhibited reactionary opposition to the former aesthetic, the contributions made in its stead aided in the initiation of norms that continue to influence composition, especially that of choral music, today. Among those new norms are the close friendships that developed among members of the Monday Group, which would initiate a long era of close conductor-composer contact, which further spurred the continued refinement of Swedish choral ensembles and development of choral repertoire. Above all else, the Måndagsgruppen, in a relatively short period of time, helped to transform the music climate of Sweden from one of dogged traditionalism to one of liberalism to match that of any country in the world,¹⁸ providing the fuel necessary for the maturation of the widely admired choral tradition one sees today.

¹⁷ Bo Wallner (1923-2004) was Sweden's leading musicologist for decades and once an adviser to the Swedish Radio. Among many contributions is a 1991 multi-volume work on Wilhelm Stenhammar, *Wilhelm Stenhammar och hans tid* (Wilhelm Stenhammar and his time).

¹⁸ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 12-14.

CHAPTER III

SOCIETAL AMALGAM

As aforementioned, Richard Sparks and Lennart Reimers have written extensively about the development of the Swedish “choral miracle.” Where Reimers focuses mainly on developments of the historical and cultural ilk, Sparks complements those ideas with his own submission, which consists largely of social and institutional factors. To review, Reimers posits that the Swedish choral tradition was borne of professional training, the widespread involvement of amateurs in choral singing, bursts of national romanticism which relied on choral singing as a medium of expression, and the rediscovery of pre-Classical music, which aided in the development of the a cappella tradition. Sparks brings to light Sweden’s relatively small population and centralization in Stockholm, the development of a unique instrument (the chamber choir), the close relationship between conductors and composers, the high frequency of Swedish composers’ participation in choral singing, foreign influences, and institutional support. This chapter will serve to integrate these authors’ theories where appropriately complementary, explicating the effects of each upon the development of choral singing in Sweden as it is seen today. National movements, including Cecilianism, two periods of Romanticism, and popularism, contributed to the importance of a cappella singing through a renewal of interest in Renaissance music, Pan-scandinavian and Swedish folk music, and freedom of

religious expression in the Free Church, which became a venue for promising young musicians.

Next, the relationship between the Swedish government and the Swedish church is explored, illuminating the effects of a long tradition of a cappella singing in the church, as well as the national standardization of education through the church. Third, prominent ramifications of artistic centralization and a long history of professional training in Stockholm are revealed. Fourth, the generous support of the Swedish State for the arts after World War II, as well as the reign of the Monday Group in Swedish Radio and academic institutions, reveal much about the rapid advancement of choral singing and modernism in Sweden from about 1945 onward. Finally, the close relationships shared between composers and choral conductors in Sweden, as well as participation of several conductors in prominent choral organizations, and the ensuing impact upon choral singing and composition are explicated.

National Movements and Foreign Influence

Cecilianism

The Cecilian movement in Sweden provided the major foundation of the choral sound ideal that developed in Sweden during the nineteenth century.¹⁹ The work of Franz Xaver Witt (1834-1888) and his *Allgemeiner Deutscher Caecilienverein* (1868) codified a widespread European desire to reclaim and restore early music. The works of the most venerated composer of this movement, Palestrina, came to enjoy immense popularity and

¹⁹ Reimers, “A Cappella,” 166.

adulation as the creator of music most pure. At outset, this style of singing proved difficult for Swedish choirs, which had been accustomed formerly to homophonic hymn and folk settings, except in a few regions where polyphonic singing was practiced. One example of such performances is that of Palestrina's *Impropria* in 1796 at St. Jacob's Church in Stockholm under the direction of Abbé Vogler.²⁰

As interest peaked in the works of the Netherlanders, Cecilian fervor led to some apparent specialization in the performance of this repertoire during the 1800s. Carl Abraham Mankell (1802-1868) was a leader during this era, and from about 1834 to 1842, Mankell produced several concerts of pre-classical music at St. Clara in Stockholm, including works of Bach and Palestrina. From 1840-1842, Mankell led Concordia, a church music association based at St. Clara, and also began teaching at the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. A major contribution to the repertoire during this period was the 1854 *Musica Sacra I* of Johan Peter Cronhamn (1803-1875), who taught choral singing at the Royal Academy. His work is a collection of works by Dufay, Ockeghem, Josquin, and Palestrina for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices, with texts in Swedish.

As women gradually gained social liberation in the late 1800s, they naturally became a more active part of adult choral activities, and eventually came to usurp the role of the child in church singing. From about 1880, there came a crystallization of use of the mixed-voice, adult choir within the choral services. Some less formal mixed-voice ensembles had existed prior to that decade, such as that of the Royal Palace Chapel, but

²⁰ Ibid.

the first true exponent of the mixed-voice movement was the choir of Maria Magdalena Church in Stockholm, founded in 1886, which still remains in service today. Later, Stockholm Cathedral would officially instate the practice in 1891, spurring other parishes in the city to follow suit. Church singing in the mixed, unaccompanied style was further institutionalized through the establishment of a unified Association of the Friends of Church Singing, which promoted choral singing, use of liturgical alternatim, and hymn singing at a high level in the church.

Indicators of the further institutionalization of mixed, unaccompanied singing in the church are the many collections of church vocal music produced in the early 1900s, the choral settings of which are invariably for mixed voices. The movement would come to envelop not only the free churches, but also the Church of Sweden, which today boasts many of the finest church ensembles in the country. Where many of Sweden's premier choral musicians grew up in the Free Church setting, in adulthood, several have served as music directors within the State church. Thus, through a combination of Cecilian historicism and the liberation of women in society, the church choir came to rely not on youth studying in parish schools, but upon adult singers, capable of producing the a cappella ideal which would come to dominate choral singing in the many decades that followed.²¹

²¹ Ibid., 166-170.

Nationalism

Several waves of Swedish nationalism have occurred in the last two centuries, and their origins may be traced to the country's feudal past, especially during times in which the people of Sweden sensed that the nobility had begun to rule without consideration of the needs and desires of the people.²² One such period occurred from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, and is reflective of Enlightenment philosophy of egalitarianism that swept Western Europe during this era. It was during this time that several composers and artists attempted to capture the spirit of the people in settings of Swedish folk melodies. Instrumental in the collection of these musical artifacts was historian-ethnographer Arwid August Afzelius (1785-1871), who would come to publish a collection of *Svenska folkvisor* (Swedish folk songs, 1814-1817). Initially, these were set monophonically with keyboard accompaniment, but were later adapted into four-part unaccompanied settings.

By mid-nineteenth century, the nationalism that had largely been confined to Sweden's borders became more pan-Scandinavian. Pan-Scandinavian musical interest was perhaps best exemplified by the evening lecture-concerts organized by composer and professor Albert Rubensson (1826-1901) from 1844 to 1870, which were deemed "Evening entertainments with Nordic folk music." August Söderman (1832-1876) was a particularly influential composer during this time, and is considered a transitional figure, for it his folk settings that established a patently Swedish style, elevating the practice to the level of art song.

²² Ibid., 160.

Later, pan-Scandinavian interest was effectively usurped by a desire to explore and chronicle regional and local folk idioms. Dialect societies came into vogue, signaling a more heightened sense of self-awareness and a desire to preserve the uniqueness of local folk traditions through the compilation of social histories. Literary works illustrated and elevated the work of the commoner. Chorally, this renaissance was led by newly established local choirs, which by that time had numerous collections of folk settings from which to draw. While the founding of such choirs was not specific to Sweden, they continue even today to serve as vessels of preservation of patently Swedish music.²³

Composers of choral music during the 1890s, inspired by yet another wave of nationalism, came to establish mixed, unaccompanied singing as the staple form of choral expression in Sweden. The most influential composers of that era enjoy reputations that endure powerfully into the present. Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1924), Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867-1942), and Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960) are counted among the leading musical personae of the day. Alfvén is of particular importance, not only for his numerous choral compositions, but also for his work as a choral conductor.

The major ensemble exponent of Swedish nationalism, deemed by Reimers the “local heritage choirs,”²⁴ continue at present day to give voice to the nationwide fervor so alive in the late nineteenth century. They have managed to do so as a result of their occupying a particular niche. That is, they operate not in the realm of amateurism as do

²³ Ibid., 160-161.

²⁴ Ibid., 162.

oratorio societies, nor do they operate in the professional realm, particularly that which would begin to dominate post-World War II. These heritage choirs endure as vessels of belonging and community, preserving that which was lost through the dismantling of the old feudal system and the onslaught of industrialization. Indeed, these choirs serve as pillars of Swedish social and historical awareness, having given rise to local heritage societies, community centers, and museums. Additionally, such ensembles formed the nucleus of the Swedish Union of Choirs, which was established in 1925. Naturally, a cappella, mixed-voice repertoire continues to dominate the repertoire of these choruses, for it is that style of singing that has, through centuries of development and refinement, become an intrinsic, indivisible feature of Swedish ethos. Undoubtedly, the activity of such ensembles contributed to a wider awareness of choral activity in Sweden and is a factor in the high rate of choral participation among the Swedish people.

Popularism

In addition to waves of nationalism, church culture experienced a period of revivalism following the 1858 repeal of the Anti-Conventicles Act of 1726, which had prohibited any sort of religious gatherings outside the Church of Sweden.²⁵ In the wake of this repeal, other denominations gained footing in Sweden, including those of the Baptists and Methodists. Additional sects developed in the form of the Evangelical National Missionary Society of Sweden (1878), which was given birth through a secessionist movement from the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden (1876).

²⁵ Lester B. Orfield and Benjamin F. Boyer, *The Growth of Scandinavian Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press for Temple University Publications, 1953), 274.

According to Reimers, choral singing in the mixed, unaccompanied style took a leading role among these newly formed denominations, with the strongest emphasis being among the Baptist institutions, its maturity occurring more or less alongside the development of mixed singing in the school setting.²⁶ From the mid-nineteenth century onward, there occurred an influx of musical material from other European countries, particularly those of Anglo-Saxon origin. Many pre-existing works were adapted to support the Swedish language, which was gradually gaining legitimacy as a language worthy of art music. By the 1880s, the spirit of integrated musical practice had grown to include the Church of Sweden, and works were then freely disseminated in its parishes and the free churches. By the twentieth century, even modern art music began to make its way into the Free Church.²⁷

The role of the Free Church in the development of choral music in Sweden must not be underestimated. In the Church of Sweden, music served a uniformly liturgical purpose, spreading and reinforcing the message. Alternatively, music in the free church serves a dual purpose: it spreads the message, but it also provides an open opportunity for youth with an interest in music to perform and hone their skills on a regular basis in an environment of mixed a cappella singing. Furthermore, singing enjoyed a concentrated interest in these churches, particularly in their nascent years, as most other expressive activities—dancing, for instance—were forbidden. Indeed, a number of Sweden's most treasured choral conductors (Alfvén, Andersson, Johansson, Ericson, et al.) were exposed

²⁶ Reimers, "A Cappella," 163.

²⁷ Ibid., 165.

to the Free Church musical environment. Ericson is the son of a Methodist minister, for example.²⁸

Church and State

As important as the Free Church in the development of choral singing in Sweden was, the close relationship shared between the Lutheran Church and the Swedish State is another root of the country's choral tradition. Church scholars (trained musicians) in the Church of Sweden succeeded the vicars choral of the Catholic church after the Reformation, becoming leaders of music education in their respective communities. In the mid-nineteenth century, the State began a process of educational centralization, and in 1842, passed a statute that charged the church with providing a uniform elementary education. In order for minimum requirements to be met, each parish was required to provide lessons in church singing. As the century wore on, this course title was altered to "singing," and later, in 1955, to "music."

Among the first publications for the elementary schools are four-part arrangements for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices, which pay homage to the Protestant tradition of hymn singing. That four-part arrangements were available at such a time is remarkable when one considers that organs were uncommon in the 1800s and church attendance was a requirement. However, congregational singing had hitherto been led by church officials or school choirs, suggesting that for decades, if not for centuries, congregants had been exposed to mixed-voice, a cappella singing.

²⁸ Ingrid Leibbrandt. *On the Road to Paradise*, 43.

In the nineteenth century, four-part hymn singing became more common through the work of cantors, sextons, and students. Songbooks of this period grew to include folk arrangements, perhaps an early sign of the appreciation for varied styles that was to become prominent in the twentieth century. Furthermore, music masters, graduates of the Royal Academy of Music, became increasingly common as engineers of the singing curriculum in elementary schools, lending a further air of professionalism to the process.

As mentioned, mixed choral singing within schools and the church was also a hallmark of women's liberation in Sweden. In 1854, women were admitted to the Royal Academy to train as music teachers. Gradually, more focus was given to mixed singing with the involvement of women, rather than with school choir and congregation. By the end of the nineteenth century, coeducational schools were more numerous, and by the mid-twentieth century, single-sex institutions had mostly disappeared. The assertion follows that from about 1850 onward, generations of elementary school children were exposed to mixed-voice, unaccompanied singing, which from the beginning served as a central pillar of their education.²⁹

Professional Training and Artistic Centralization

By the end of the eighteenth century, two major centers of choral training had emerged in Sweden, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and the Royal Opera. At the Royal Academy, training in four-part choral singing was available as early as 1797, and at the Opera, choruses for mixed voices appeared as early as 1788. One such example, *Han kommer den hövding* (He is the ruler) from the opera *Gustaf Adolf och Ebba Brahe*

²⁹ Reimers, "A Cappella," 156-160.

(Gustav Adolf and Ebba Brahe, 1788) by Georg Joseph “Abbé” Vogler (1749-1814), is written for mixed voices, but its manner of composition would also lend itself to an a cappella performance. Mixed-voice choral singing continued sporadically through the early nineteenth century, but consisted mostly of the performance of accompanied works, though two prominent examples of a cappella singing are apparent. Four-part, unaccompanied arrangements of traditional melodies appear in print as early as 1834.

The formal admission of women to the Swedish Academy of Music brought a more concentrated and rapid development of mixed choral singing in the country. Further institutionalization of choral training here resulted in concerts of both accompanied and unaccompanied repertoire, and by the 1870s, the unaccompanied repertoire had expanded to include works in eight parts, such as the *Sju Sånger för blandad kör* (Seven Songs for unaccompanied mixed choir, 1851) by Ludwig Norman (1831-1885). Norman would later dedicate his *Jordens oro viker* (The Unrest of the Earth Doth Subside, ca. 1878), a motet for two unaccompanied mixed choirs, to the choral singers at the Royal Theater.

As the nineteenth century wore on, more prominent choral organizations developed, and were often associated with churches, theaters, or educational institutions, including the Göteborg and Malmö conservatories, which developed in the early nineteenth century. Amateur harmonic societies also came into being, perhaps inspired by the development of like ensembles in nearby Germany. Large church choirs were also

freed from association with the educational system and took on a more professional bent of operation, offering remuneration to their choristers.³⁰

The centralization of choral activity in Stockholm continued well into the twentieth century, particularly during the early career of Eric Ericson (b. 1918). Sparks contends that the centralization of professional training continues even today, in spite of a general trend of decentralization.³¹ In the period from 1940 to 1960, Stockholm was the only true artistic center in Sweden and possessed the only State College of Music. For decades, the most talented musicians, particularly those training in choral conducting, had only one place of study and serious musical activity. Stockholm today remains the largest center of cultural activity in Sweden, possessing the Swedish Radio, the Royal Opera, and Royal Academy of Music; however, other areas of active choral training have since developed, including those in Malmö and Göteborg, the genesis of which has much to do with efforts to decentralize governmental and cultural activities away from Stockholm since the 1960s.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the members of the Monday Group came to dominate musical life in the 1950s and 1960s, and Eric Ericson in particular had an enormous impact on the most gifted choral conductors, training some 1500 in his three decades as professor at the State College of Music.³² In addition to his enormous and

³⁰ Ibid., 142-150.

³¹ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 125.

³² Richard Sparks, "Eric Ericson birthday tribute," <http://richardsparks1.blogspot.com/2008/10/eric-ericson-birthday-tribute.html> (accessed February 12, 2012).

enduring influence on choral conducting students, he also conducted several of the most prominent choral ensembles in Sweden, including the famed male choir, Orphei Drängar (literally, Farmhands of Orpheus, Uppsala), the St. Jacob's Church choir, and both the Swedish Radio Choir and Chamber Choir.

In short, the centralization of musical study, and specifically choral study, helped create a high concentration of very skilled choral musicians, most of whom sang for and/or studied with Eric Ericson beginning in the mid-twentieth century. His students and students of his students continue to dominate the choral scene today, proliferating his techniques and enshrining a now-innate choral aesthetic that dominates the choral activities in the country.

Institutional Support and the Monday Group

Sweden's post-war financial and political situations enabled an unprecedented institutional support of the arts, which had long been a staple of Swedish cultural life. The Swedish Radio, influenced heavily by the Monday Group, was steadfastly dedicated to new music and supportive of the Radio Choir, even when the work of contemporary composers remained generally unpopular. The guiding philosophy of the Radio staff was one that valued new works as important and deserving of exposure. Their position also helped Ericson build the Radio and Chamber Choirs by creating an environment that, in addition to the close relationships between conductors and choirs, invited an influx of new works that helped elevate both choirs to higher planes of capability.

Centralization of artistic activity and musical study in Stockholm was enhanced in part by the generous support of the post-World War II Swedish state, which sought to

avoid the loss of cultural appreciation among the middle and lower class. Author David Jenkins posits that early socialist thinkers assumed that when provided with necessary support in other areas of life, workers would seek out cultural activities naturally. Therefore, the Swedish welfare state had largely ignored artistic causes, but government officials came to realize that the view of art as luxury was failing the Swedish people. Worry that the birth of an “intellectual proletariat”³³ was nigh led to an about-face in government philosophy concerning the arts, and more egalitarian financial support was offered in an effort to fully engage all sectors of the population in artistic and cultural activities. The Social Democratic Party, in power after World War II, encouraged the funding of any activities benefitting public well being, including the work of the Radio Choir. In fact, Ericson’s role as the conductor of that choir was considered that of a state employee,³⁴ which demonstrates the extent of government involvement in the arts at the highest echelon, and the consideration of the arts as integral to the cultural lives of all people, regardless of class or social station. Furthermore, a newly formed circuit of *Rikskonserter* (Swedish National Concerts), begun in 1968 and ended in 2011, brought cultural exposure to schools and the general public through evening performances. These concerts were highly eclectic, featuring music of various styles and from various periods in order to promote broad cultural appreciation. The practice continues today, but is no longer a centralized operation.

³³ David Jenkins, “Music in the Welfare State,” in *Swedish Music Past and Present*, ed. Bengt Pleijel (Stockholm: Boktryckeri AB, n.d.), 18.

³⁴ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 121.

The government's investment in choral music through the funding of the Radio's progressive musical philosophy, and by extension, the work of contemporary composers, was crucial to both the development of the Radio Choir and Chamber Choir and their reputations abroad as eager performers of modern works.³⁵ In spite of a history of both accompanied and unaccompanied repertoire, under the guidance of Eric Ericson and through the support of the Monday Group, unaccompanied works and works of a modern bent became the staple repertoire for these ensembles. As more composers gained interest in writing for Ericson's increasingly refined Chamber Choir, what had been a choir of thirteen friends from the College of Music brought together to sing madrigals and sacred music from the Renaissance became one that, over the course of the 1950s, was challenged with repertoire of increasing complexity. Ericson himself remarked that the 1950s were a training ground for the Chamber Choir. In fact, he believes steadfastly that repertoire itself has been the largest influence on the choir's capabilities and sound.³⁶

Evidence of that assertion may be found in the Chamber Choir's experience with Ingvar Lidholm's *Laudi* (1947), which was once considered notorious for its introduction of new vocal demands and the inclusion of what were then highly difficult intervallic relationships. Ericson remarked that measure six required six months of work for performance readiness.³⁷ Today, however, this piece is considered the first masterwork

³⁵ Ibid., 25-26.

³⁶ Leibbrandt, *On the Road to Paradise*, 44.

³⁷ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 22.

of modern Swedish music,³⁸ and is used for auditions for the Chamber Choir at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, a clear indication of Ericson's influence and the influence of difficult repertoire has had in the development of choral singing in Sweden.³⁹

As, Ericson's influence was disseminated throughout the country and standards rose from the 1950s onward, the line between professional and amateur music-making grew more obscure, as those who might be considered amateur in music education could still become professionally involved in choirs of a professional nature.⁴⁰ This author has been afforded the opportunity to hear two choirs largely consisting of amateurs, the Swedish Chamber Choir, under the direction of Simon Phipps, and the St. Jacob's Chamber Choir, under the direction of Gary Graden. In spite of their amateur classification, both ensembles have received accolades at the international level.

³⁸ Ellison Cori, "Music: There's a Method to This 'Choral Miracle'." *New York Times*, February 4, 2001, 29, *Newspaper Source Plus*, EBSCO host (accessed May 13, 2011).

³⁹ Bo Wallner, "The Great Unaccompanied Choral Settings," in *Choral Music Perspectives*, ed. Lennart Reimers and Bo Wallner (Uppsala: Almqvist och Wiksell Tryckeri, 1993), 188.

⁴⁰ Reimers, "A Cappella," 150-151.

Composer and Conductor

In addition to the close relationship between the Swedish state and the Lutheran Church, there also existed and continues to exist a uniquely close relationship between conductors and composers. From Ericson's early years through the present, Swedish conductors and composers have enjoyed a close relationship with one another. Ericson himself shared lifelong friendships with composers Ingvar Lidholm (b. 1921) and Sven-Erik Bäck (1919-1994), among others. Ericson's friendship with Lidholm in particular, who is considered Sweden's greatest composer of that era, was instrumental in the latter's regular contributions to the a cappella idiom, in which he has produced some of the most enduring works in the repertoire.⁴¹ Such friendships were not just important for the repertoire, but important for the early development and endurance of the choir, who often committed to the mastery of a new and difficult piece because the composer was a friend. Ericson's treatment of and friendship with composers and his tireless commitment to new repertoire were highly influential on the generations of conductors that followed, producing a favorable environment for modern works in the a cappella idiom.⁴²

Also essential to the development of unaccompanied choral repertoire was that many composers were and are choral musicians. It follows naturally that many of these composers studied with and/or sang for Ericson, among them: Lars Edlund (b. 1922), Arne Mellnäs (1933-2002), Eskil Hemberg (b. 1938), and Thomas Jennefelt, who sang for Ericson as both a student at the State College and later with the Chamber Choir,

⁴¹ Ellison Cori, "There's a Method," 29.

⁴² Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 23-24.

serving as its President. Jennefelt remarks that he takes great pride in having, through his own singing, an extensive knowledge of the proper vowel formation that allows choir members to sing in the same spectrum.⁴³ According to Sparks, this kind of close relationship, which also existed with other major choral conductors, is far more usual in Sweden than elsewhere.⁴⁴

Conclusions

After reviewing the previous information, a clear path of development of Swedish choral singing reveals itself. After centuries of relative dormancy, several developments in the late 1700s and 1800s initiated a period of extensive growth in the medium. Beginning with the composition of Roman's *Svenska Mässan* in 1752, there came a period of great progress in which large professional organizations, namely the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and the Royal Opera, were established in Stockholm in the 1770s, and there is evidence that each organization engaged in mixed, a cappella singing. Further, these institutions served to elevate societal expectations for public performance.

The 1800s proved highly rich for the continued development of choral singing in Sweden. The Cecilian movement, considered the ultimate root of a cappella art, aided in the revival of early music by composers such as Dufay, Ockeghem, and Palestrina. The new emphasis on unaccompanied, polyphonic repertoire challenged Swedish choirs, who came to sing such repertoire well as the century wore on. With the fervor for early music came also a concentrated interest in the folk tradition, with many studies devoted to the

⁴³ Jennefelt, Interview.

⁴⁴ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 24.

topic and several collections of mixed-voice arrangements produced. Further, periods of romantic nationalism spurred also the development of a patently Swedish sound, with thanks in particular to the works of Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Hugo Alfvén in the late 1800s.

The industrial age also granted the middle class the opportunity to become fully engaged in the cultural activities of the country, one of the manifestations of which was the establishment of music societies and local heritage choirs that developed throughout the larger settled areas. With the repeal of the Anti-Conventicles Act in 1858, the citizenry was granted, too, the freedom to enjoy the church denomination of their choosing. As stated, the development of music within the Free Churches, which were not constrained by liturgical rigidity, was highly influential in the development of musical skills of individual musicians, many of whom would become music directors in prestigious State Churches throughout the country. Additionally, mixed, unaccompanied singing served as the preeminent genre within Free Churches and enjoyed further refinement there.

Also important in the development of Swedish choral singing was the nationalization of education in 1842, which mandated the offering of a church singing course in every State Church parish. The mandate provided that every child from an early age was exposed to and trained in the art of mixed, unaccompanied singing. Furthermore, graduates of the Royal Academy became increasingly involved with curriculum development, raising standards throughout the nation. In short, the nationalization of education in the churches ensured that several generations of youth

were exposed to mixed, a cappella singing from a very early age. Finally, in 1854, women were invited to enroll in the Royal Academy, eventually usurping the role of the youth voice in church singing and gaining greater prominence in the work of mixed choirs. By the late 1800s, many large church choirs had become professional in nature, offering payment to their members and further elevating the a cappella art form.

Though the standard of choral singing rose rapidly throughout the nation as a result of the nationalization of education, the center of professional musical training and choral singing remained in Stockholm throughout the first half of the twentieth century, particularly during the early activity of Eric Ericson, teacher of conducting at the Royal Academy and conductor of the Swedish Radio Choir and Chamber Choir. Through the work of the Monday Group, of which Ericson was a part, staunch traditionalism and music in the style of the late romantics fell out of favor, making way for a period of modernist domination. Ericson's Chamber Choir, which began as a small group dedicated to the performance of early music, would later serve as a vehicle and a catalyst for the furthered development of a cappella singing in the modern genre.

Through the generous support of the State after the Second World War and the work of members of the Monday Group, who came to dominate the programming philosophy of the Swedish Radio, modern choral music was granted both air time and ensembles capable and willing to perform new choral music. Government support also kept music in general in the hands of the middle class, preventing the creation of an intellectual proletariat. Through varied programming and careful juxtaposition of genre,

the Swedish people were encouraged to appreciate the new modern voice through listening to Swedish Radio and attending Rikskonserter.

Also important to the ultimate development of Swedish choral singing was the close relationship shared between choral conductors and composers of choral music, the nature of which is unique among that of other countries. Of particular note is the close relationship between Ingvar Lidholm and Eric Ericson. It is Lidholm's *Laudi* that is considered the first work of modern Swedish choral music, and today it has become a staple of the repertoire, due largely to the work of the Radio Choir in mastering it. Such close conductor/composer relationships spurred the development of the choral art in two major ways. First, it was often the case that composers were members of the choirs (as in the case of Jennefelt), or simply friends with the conductor and choir members. It came naturally that friends of the composer would work diligently to perfect and give voice to their works. Second, the composers' intimate knowledge of the choirs and the good tenets of choral repertoire produced highly challenging, yet highly refined works.

Finally, Ericson's work as a conducting teacher for some 1500 students allowed for his conducting philosophy to dominate choral culture well into the present day. In spite of the gradual decentralization of artistic activity after the 1960s, Ericson's teachings remained dominant, as they were disseminated throughout the country through the work of his students and students' students. In short, his work that was once confined to a small choir of friends and colleagues would, over the course of several decades, become a nationalized, innate choral philosophy that elevated Swedish choral singing to extraordinary levels, whether choristers were paid professionals, highly skilled amateurs,

or youth. After Ericson's retirement from the Radio Choir in 1983, however, came a period of artistic introspection for composers, and a younger generation, including Thomas Jennefelt, would seek a new stylistic voice in the choral genre as modernism reached its twilight years.

CHAPTER IV

THOMAS JENNEFELT: BRIEF BIOGRAPHY AND SUMMARY OF COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Thomas Jennefelt was born in 1954 in Huddinge, Sweden. His interest in music was first nurtured through studies in piano and guitar, which he began at age nine,⁴⁵ and he became involved in choral music in his teenage years, during which he sang in a local church choir. At the age of sixteen, he began studies in harmony, ear-training, and voice with Hans Kyhle, his church choir director and a member of Eric Ericson's Stockholm Chamber Choir.⁴⁶ Kyhle had great confidence in Jennefelt's talents, and encouraged him to pursue a life in music; therefore, in 1974, Jennefelt entered the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, where he studied until 1980, completing further studies with Lars-Gunnar Bodin, Gunnar Bucht and Arne Mellnäs, and singing in the Chamber Choir there under Ericson's direction.

In 1977 and 1978, Jennefelt experienced two major successes that resulted in international recognition. First, his *Descending Music* for four violins was chosen for performance at the Young Nordic Music Festival in Reykjavik, Iceland. Second,

⁴⁵ Karen Soderberg, "A Survey of Selected Contemporary Swedish Choral Composers and Literature." (D.M.A. diss., University of Arizona, Tucson, 1991), 33.

⁴⁶ Rolf Haglund. "Thomas Jennefelt." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/46505> (accessed January 4, 2012).

Jennefelt first gained international prominence in the choral arena with his *Warning to the Rich*, written in the summer of 1977 and performed at the Young Nordic Music Festival in Bergen, Norway.⁴⁷ His successful debut produced a flurry of commissions for works of a similar style, though his fear of being pigeonholed into one particular modus of expression led him to produce works of varied aesthetic content.⁴⁸ Well-known works produced in the years that followed favored contradiction of traditional text settings. Such works are characterized by syllabic settings and provide alternative interpretations of well-known texts.⁴⁹ Such works include his *Dichterliebe I-X* (1990), which find horror in Heine's text, in direct contrast to Schumann's more romantically idyllic settings, and his *Villarosa Sequences* (1993-2001), the third movement of which is the subject of this study.

Inherent in Jennefelt's choral output is a consummate understanding of vocalism, which is undoubtedly a product of his own participation in the Stockholm/Eric Ericson Chamber Choir throughout the 1980s and 1990s. His experience in and relationship with that ensemble profoundly influenced and provided venue for his compositions. Additionally, he developed a very close friendship with Eric Ericson, whom he considers

⁴⁷ Soderberg, "A Survey," 33.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 34.

⁴⁹ Haglund, "Jennefelt."

among his most significant composition teachers,⁵⁰ and whom he admires for his “artistic approach to the music.”⁵¹

The latter half of the 1980s was a time of reevaluation for Swedish composers of choral music, particularly among the younger generation of which Jennefelt was a part. That period of introspection was so arresting that Sparks refers to it as a “crisis of confidence.”⁵² A period of diverging styles dominated throughout the 1980s, as the younger generation reacted against the reign of modernism, which they felt had exhausted itself. Generally, there was a move toward tonality, and American minimalism came into vogue briefly in the early 1980s, when it appeared in works by Jennefelt and Anders Hillborg (b. 1954).⁵³ As popular/rock music gained footing during the 1980s and a general move toward tonality began to occur, composers were left without a unified manner of composition, and enjoyed far less the dominating, untempered power of the preceding generation, which was also smaller in number and therefore given greater exposure.⁵⁴ The latter portion of the decade was therefore relatively stagnant in terms of choral music composition.

As mentioned, Jennefelt enjoyed significant success with his 1990 *Dichterliebe*, but his most striking contribution to the repertoire in that decade spoke through his own

⁵⁰ Soderberg, “A Survey,” 33.

⁵¹ Ibid., 34.

⁵² Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 87.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 118.

minimalistic voice. The *Tre sekvenser*, or the original three movements of the *Villarosa Sequences*, were completed in 1993, and together with other minimalistic works, such as Sven-David Sandström's *High Mass* (1994), led to a period of debate not seen since modernists overcame the traditionalists in the 1950s. Critics, Carl-Gunnar Åhlén among them, assailed the new, accessible style as a means to appeal to a broad audience, compared the new minimalistic style to popular genres, and accused composers of minimalistic music of using a style similar to popular music as a means of making money through the music industry.⁵⁵

Though many of Jennefelt's works are of a minimalistic bent and are marked by a regular pulse, repeated rhythm, and a "profusion of choral color,"⁵⁶ they are undeserving of the criticisms of overt simplicity levied by critics in the 1990s. As mentioned, his works from the 1980s onward possess minimalistic tendencies, though he evades dogmatic minimalism. Instead, he seeks the "precise minimum,"—that is, a directness, focus, and pith.⁵⁷ Additionally, one finds a favoring of free tonal character and lyricism in melody, which also pervade his instrumental works. Finally, he enjoys experimentation with texture and color, and that affinity is evident in works from the late

⁵⁵ Carl-Gunnar Åhlén, "Musikindustrin—en blind jätte," *Svenska Dagbladet* (1 March 1995): 25.

⁵⁶ Tony Lundman, "Thomas Jennefelt (CV)." <http://www.thomasjennefelt.se/about/cvsresume-en.html> (accessed January 4, 2012).

⁵⁷ David Daniel Djernaes. "Interdependent Contrasts, Structural Motives, and Organicism in Composition: An Analysis of *Villarosa saria* by Thomas Jennefelt," (Ph.D diss., University of California—Santa Barbara, 2007), 2.

1980s onward.⁵⁸ Also during that time, Jennefelt began an exploration of the psychology of the region between safety and security and the unsafe and insecure, or more specifically, the dichotomous existence of beauty and its potential destruction. He sought to produce works of a Utopian nature that relied on simplicity and beauty above all else. Of particular influence during that period were the works of American minimalist composer, Steve Reich (b. 1936). As that style matured, Jennefelt began to pair its simplicity and beauty with expressive drama, simultaneously exploring both the dramatic and the introspective.⁵⁹ The resulting amalgam was one of directness, poignancy, and melodrama, the last of which found inspiration in texts of a similar bent.⁶⁰ Soderberg explicates the specific inner workings of Jennefelt's compositional process like so:

Jennefelt uses textures as an effect and as a dramatic result, rather than using them as a structural process. He pits chromatically altered discordant chordal textures against diatonically conceived triadic chords to express the drama of the text. Seconds, sevenths, ninths and tritone intervals are prevalent in his harmonic textures. He considers the interval of the second to be more consonant, prime, and powerful than that of the unison. He uses the minor second primarily as a color interval. The tritone is used to create insecurity and uncertainty. He frequently doubles the vocal parts to create freshness, unity and brightness of sound. His musical style is progressing in an even more dramatic direction, encompassing "introspection and the psychological insight on man's existence."⁶¹

⁵⁸Soderberg, "A Survey," 35.

⁵⁹ Stig Jacobsson and Hans-Gunnar Peterson, *Swedish Composers of the 20th Century* (Stockholm: Printgraf, 1990), 94.

⁶⁰ Soderberg, "A Survey," 36-37.

⁶¹ Ibid., 37.

In more recent years, Jennefelt has continued to enjoy multifaceted success. He is a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and has served as its vice president since 2004. Recently, he has received the royal *Litteris et artibus medal* (2001), and has served as the chairman of the Society of Swedish Composers (1994-present).⁶²

⁶² Lundman, “Jennefelt.”

CHAPTER V

INTRODUCTION AND CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS: "VILLAROSA SARIALDI"

The Villarosa Sequences were composed as individual pieces though with the intention that they could be performed as a continuous suite...The roots to this music are to be found in American minimalism, Baroque music, and Swedish choral tradition.⁶³

Introduction

The *Villarosa Sequences*, a seven-movement choral cycle, were composed over the course of eight years from 1993 to 2001. While individual works have been featured, a complete performance has been rare. The St. Jacob's Chamber Choir released the complete cycle on recording in 2003,⁶⁴ and the Boston Choral Ensemble offered a live performance in 2009.⁶⁵ Jennefelt's true conception of the work involves a spatial element, as well; the complete cycle is to be performed by six choral ensembles and a soloist, arranged in circular formation around the audience by order of movement.⁶⁶ The greater cycle grew out of two smaller cycles, the first consisting of movements one through three, and the second consisting of movements five through seven. "Strimolo volio," the

⁶³ Jacques Werup, liner notes to *Villarosa Sequences*. Gary Graden and the St. Jacob's Chamber Choir, Proprius PRCD 2029, CD, 2003.

⁶⁴ Thomas Jennefelt, *Villarosa Sequences*, Gary Graden and the St. Jacob's Chamber Choir, Proprius PRCD 2029, CD, 2003.

⁶⁵ Miguel Felipe, conductor. *Villarosa Sequences* by Thomas Jennefelt. First Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Friday, November 20, 2009.

⁶⁶ Jennefelt, Interview.

soprano solo movement, was added in 2001. The overall structure of the cycle consists of two small arches in each of the original cycles that surround the central soprano solo movement. An overall arch form results (see Table 1).

Table 1. The *Villarosa Sequences*

Movement	Voicing	Year of Completion
“Aleidi floriasti”	SATB div.	1993
“Saoveri indamflavi”	TTBB	1993
“Villarosa sarialdi”	SATB div.	1993
“Strimoli Volio”	Soprano solo	2001
“Claviante briliioso”	Sop. Solo, SATB div.	1996
“Virita criosa”	SSAA	1996
“Vinamintra elitavi”	SATB divisi	1995

While not within the scope of this study, the *Sequences’* text is of note. After composing the music for each movement, Jennefelt devised his own text of a Latin-esque character. The text follows no rules of syntax or grammar, but is meant only to complement the music through the manipulation of vocal color. In short, the work is instrumentally conceived, though Jennefelt admits that some “words” within the text will draw associations for the performer and the listener, but that is not intended to force any sort of meaning.⁶⁷ In his doctoral document, Djernaes offers a thorough textual analysis of the third movement, “Villarosa sarialdi,”⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Djernaes, “Interdependent Contrasts.”

“Villarosa sarialdi,” like the cycle, is in arch form (ABCB’A’), and its compositional style is minimalistic and pandiatonic in nature. The work occupies relatively few tonal areas (a, d, and g-dorian), and these endure for extended periods, thereby creating a sense of soundscape. Changes in tonal content delineate overall structure of the piece, and chordal content within these tonal areas is restricted in most cases to two main alternating chords. Forward motion in the work is created through interaction with the steady minimalistic undergirding, and takes place through layering, alteration of rhythmic pulse rate (diminution and augmentation), textural expansion and contraction (linearization/verticalization), register change, phonemic dissonance (simultaneous occurrence of differing phonemes), dynamic pacing, contrapuntal relationships created through dynamic contrast among the vocal parts, alternating periods of stasis and activity, and contrast produced through the use of closely packed and open-spaced diatonic harmonies. Meter is in common time, with occasional forays into 2/2 and 2/4 time.

Jennefelt asserts that his *Villarosa Sequences* find influence in American minimalism, the Baroque, and the Swedish choral tradition. While the influence of American minimalism is immediately apparent in musical content and means of development, “Villarosa sarialdi” is perhaps less revealing of its Baroque and the Swedish choral tradition influences. Therefore, a closer examination is warranted. Minimalistic and Baroque influences will be explored first, followed by an examination of the piece’s relationship to Swedish choral aesthetic as described by Lennart Reimers.

Intersections of the Baroque and American Minimalism

According to Jennefelt,⁶⁹ the point of inspirational departure for “Villarosa sariaidi” is the first movement of Bach’s *St. John Passion* (BWV 245, 1724), which lends credence to his assertion that the piece finds influences in Baroque style. Those influences manifest themselves throughout the piece in conception, structure, motivic content, articulation, general affect, and texture. They are complemented and magnified by Jennefelt’s interest in the works of minimalist composer Steve Reich (b. 1936). The intersection of these two influences, though they are separated by more than two centuries, supplies a confluence of similar musical properties.

A primary way in which “Villarosa sariaidi” and “Herr unser Herrscher” are related is that they are both instrumentally conceived. Bach imposed instrumental idiom upon his vocal writing, and Jennefelt admits the same of his work, which uses vocal color as a means of expression. Additionally, Jennefelt remarks that Eric Ericson, a fine pianist, often viewed choral music from an aural perspective rather than a textual one. Additionally, he sometimes communicated his desires through the manner in which he played,⁷⁰ which exposes an instrumental link between the Baroque, the Swedish choral tradition, and Jennefelt’s work.

Another apparent influence of the Baroque, and specifically “Herr, unser Herrscher” from Bach’s *St. John Passion*, is the overall architectural design of “Villarosa sariaidi,” which takes on an arch form ABCB’A’. The opening movement of the *St. John*

⁶⁹ Jennefelt, Interview.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Passion is in da capo form, ABA, also an arch. Bach's work, as a da capo chorus, contains identical material in the A-section repeat. Four main points of comparison arise. First, each work's A and B sections are 95 measures in total length. Second, with the exception of E-flat major and f minor in the Bach, both rely upon the same key areas. Jennefelt's use of g-dorian functions as the natural minor version of Bach's g-minor. Third, sections A, B, and C of Jennefelt's work contain short interruptions or codas in mm. 38-42, 88-95, and 115-117, respectively. Bach, too, relies on short choral codas at the end of each subsection of section A of his work (mm. 28-31, 39-40, 44-46, and 55-57) and at the end of the first subsection of section B (mm. 66-69). Finally, both works rely on circle-of-fifths motion, with the Jennefelt moving slowly through the key areas, as one would expect from a minimalistic work. Table one offers a comparison overall structure.

Table 2. Formal structure of "Villarosa sariaidi" and "Herr, unser Herrscher"

	Villarosa sariaidi		Herr, unser Herrscher	
Section	Measures	Key Area(s)	Measures	Key Area(s)
Introduction	1-18	a	1-18	g
a	19-41	a	19-57	g-D-g-D-g
b	42-95	d	58-95	E-flat-f-D-g-D-A-D
c	96-129	g-dorian		
b'	130-155	d		
a'	156-165	a		

As Bukofzer notes, it is also important to regard structure and texture in the Baroque not as the product of external superimposition, but as functional outgrowth of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements within the work.⁷¹ By the late Baroque, formal procedures became codified and clear patterns emerged in the construction of various genres, but within those genres, the continual development or expansion of a single motive often drove the work forward to its natural conclusion. Bukofzer likens the process to a *perpetuum mobile*.⁷² While neither composition is technically of this sort, the term does bring to mind the continual, yet gradual way “Villarosa sariaidi” develops and in the continual manner in which the Bach unfurls.

One finds evidence of influence, too, in the motivic content and its variation in both the Jennefelt and the Bach. In the Jennefelt, the most basic motivic cell is an ascending second (m. 21). Occasionally, the motive is embellished to extend to the range of a third, inverted, and superimposed, among other alterations. A clear motivic relationship is revealed when one considers the primary melismatic motive in the soprano voice in the opening chorus of *St. John* (m. 26), which is based on embellished seconds and thirds. Figure 1 contains these basic motivic materials. Jennefelt asserts that both contrapuntal lines built upon this motive and pulse gestures should be articulated in a manner that reflects Baroque bowing, drawing yet another connection to that period and *St. John*.⁷³

⁷¹ Manfred Bukofzer. *Music in the Baroque Era*. (New York, Norton: 1947), 350.

⁷² Ibid., 358-359.

⁷³ Jennefelt, Interview.

Figure 1. Basic musical material in “Villarosa sarialdi”

and “Herr, unser Herrscher”

“Villarosa sarialdi” (m. 21)



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“Herr, unser Herrscher” (m. 21)



Herr, unser Herrscher from *St. John Passion* by J.S. Bach
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Next, the Baroque philosophy of the affections or passions was at the forefront of the compositional process during that era. Lorenzo Giacomini, poet critic from the sixteenth century, described affections as ““a spiritual movement or operation of the mind in which it is attracted or repelled by an object it has come to know.””⁷⁴ Stimulation by external and internal spirits was said to cause imbalances in body vapors, and such imbalances caused particular spiritual movements and the achievement of enduring states of existence. Once a state was achieved, it remained until another set of stimuli produced an alteration. Common affections included fear, joy, love, and hate, and the utmost

⁷⁴ Lorenzo Giacomini, “De la purgation de la tragedia,” in *Orationi e discorsi* (Florence: ne le case de Samartelli, 1597), 38. In Claude V. Palisca, *Baroque Music* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1969), 3-4.

purpose of music and other arts was to emulate nature—that is, to arouse those affections in human beings.⁷⁵ One finds in a great portion of late Baroque music an enduring character within individual works, which is exhibited by both “Villarosa sariaidi” and “Herr, Unser Herrscher.” In the former, there are two major musical gestures. The first consists of steady, chordal motion that often sustains the development of a florid contrapuntal line in the upper voices (m. 32), and the second is a less active state of homophony (m. 44). Neither gesture remains static; the intertwining of both is often a manner of initiating forward motion through dramatic relief. In the Bach, the two major gestures are dense homophonic melisma (m. 21), and more open gestures of imitation (m. 35). As in “Villarosa,” moments wherein the two gestures are combined often represent passages of great drama through contrast and an additive affect. Figure 2 outlines these musical gestures.

Figure 2. Major Musical Gestures in Jennefelt and Bach

Jennefelt: Harmonic support of contrapuntal line (m. 32)

The image shows a musical score for measure 32 of a piece by Jennefelt. The score is written for five parts: Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 4/4. The measure number '32' is in a box above the first staff. The Soprano parts (S1 and S2) have a melodic line with the syllable '(Ah)' written below them. The Alto and Tenor parts have a sustained note with the syllable 'a - - - no,' written below them. The Bass part has a sustained note. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, time signatures, and note values.

⁷⁵ Palisca, *Baroque Music* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968), 4.

Jennefelt: Static homophony (m. 32)

44 *sempre sim.*

S saO, saO, saO, saO,

A

T *sempre sim.*

T saO, saO, saO, saO,

B

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Bach: Dense contrapuntal gesture (m. 21)

Herr - - - - -

Herr - - - - -

Herr - - - - -

Herr - - - - -

Bach: Texturally light canonic gesture (m. 33-34)

Alto

Tenor

Bass

“Herr, unser Herrscher” from *St. John Passion* by J.S. Bach
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At this juncture, it is important to draw connections between clear Bachian influences and those of American minimalism in “Villarosa” as it relates to texture. First, harmonic rhythm must be addressed. As Baroque composers were generally interested in arousing steady states of being, so minimalist composers found interest in regular, yet slow rates of harmonic change and pulse gestures that produced soundscapes against which the piece could unfold. Subtle alteration of motivic material within those soundscapes is a major source of development in minimalist technique. The analogous gesture in “Herr unser Herrscher” is a relatively consistent half bar harmonic change, which accelerates to a quarter-bar pace during canonic moments (mm. 32-33), increasing the sense of forward motion toward the next major cadence (see Fig. 3).

Figure 3. Harmonic rhythm shift in “Herr, unser Herrscher” (mm. 32-33)



“Herr, unser Herrscher” from *St. John Passion* by J.S. Bach
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“Villarosa sariaIdi” derives its forward motion from alterations in harmonic rhythm (2-bar, one-bar, and half-bar gestures) and rhythmic diminution within the scope of that harmonic rhythm (pulse gestures). Interestingly, the rate of harmonic change in the Jennefelt, influenced by Bach, might be considered relatively rapid among other minimalist works, while the rate of harmonic change in the Bach is relatively slow when one considers the walking bass in Baroque arias of the same era by Händel, for example.

One can also draw a connection between moments of stretto-like passages in the Bach (mm. 50) and rhythmic diminution in the Jennefelt, which is often combined with *accelerando*. Each produces tension that leads to cadence. Bukofzer remarks that the function of the fugue was one of “intensification through expansion,” and that stretto provided for intensification within the “same... space within which the voices were condensed.”⁷⁶ While the canonic passages in the Bach are not on a fugal scale, the closer approximation of entrances provides similar effect when they occur every quarter note, rather than every full or half measure.

In each section of “Villarosa,” soundscape is achieved through a reliance on two chordal areas. Measures 1-42 include motion between a minor and F major. Measures 42-95, in the subdominant key area, rely on oscillation between d minor (with added second) and a cluster formed by simultaneous a-minor and B-flat-major triads. Measures 96-129, in the subtonic dorian key (G-dorian), oscillate between g-minor and d-minor harmonies. Finally, measures 130-155, again in the subdominant key area, rely solely on d-minor and B-flat-major chordal areas. The reliance on few chordal areas is a trademark of minimalist compositional style, but it also finds an analog in the creation of an overarching sense of *affekt*—the steady, enduring state of being which was valued as a means of expression in the Baroque period. In “Herr, unser Herrscher,” one discovers prolonged passages in g minor grounded by a repeated G in the continuo and chordal alteration at the half-bar, for example (mm. 20-23), while periods of more rapid development rely upon circle-of-fifths motion in the continuo (mm. 38-39).

⁷⁶ Bukofzer, *Baroque Music*, 362-363.

Alternatively, periods of rapid development may also rely on an ornamented bass line centered on a single pitch with quarter bar harmonic rhythm. In short, both works rely on variation of harmonic rhythm and enduring tonalities to provide the foundation against which they are developed.

The previous discussion of harmonic grounding is quite integral to the comparison of these two works, when one considers that by the late Baroque, “the absorption of tonality into counterpoint gave the melodic design and the contrapuntal texture unprecedented harmonic support.”⁷⁷ As the new manner of thinking developed, however, considerations of melody were gradually usurped by considerations of harmony, but the preservation of the continuo aided in the survival of the dualistic nature of composition, and in the works of Bach, “luxuriant counterpoint” reached its zenith.⁷⁸ This dualism is apparent in “Herr, unser Herrscher,” where the polarity of continuo and melodic line is preserved and the continuo explicitly supports the melodic motion. Such harmonic support is not always so explicit in “Villarosa sariaidi” (m. 104), but imitation of the dualistic texture is clear. In passages with contrapuntal activity, the soprano voices carry the melodic interest, while the lower parts establish tonal area in a homophonic manner (m. 29). Such imitation of texture affords Jennefelt a level of relief within his work that calls attention to motivic development within his work (see Fig. 4).

⁷⁷ Ibid., 221.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Figure 4. Harmonic/melodic relationships in “Villarosa sarialdi”

m. 104

Figure 4 shows the musical score for measures 104 of "Villarosa sarialdi". The score is for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The Soprano part has the lyrics "que - ri - a et fa - la - vi - no au - gem, ___". The Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts have the vocalization "(Oh)". The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The Soprano part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the other parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and chords.

m. 29

Figure 5 shows the musical score for measures 29 of "Villarosa sarialdi". The score is for five parts: Piano 1 (1), Piano 2 (2), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The Piano 1 part has the lyrics "a - - - no, ___" and features a melodic line with a crescendo from *p* to *mf*. The Piano 2 part has the vocalization "(Ah)" and features a rapid, repetitive rhythmic pattern. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts have the lyrics "a - - - no" and provide harmonic support with sustained notes and chords. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.

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After discussion of foundational harmonic underpinning rooted in textural imitation of the style of “Herr, unser Herrscher,” a discussion of the minimalistic manner in which “Villarosa sarialdi” ultimately develops is now appropriate. The introductory section, mm. 1-18, develops in a straightforward manner. The opening motive set to the

text “Ori,” is developed over the course of seven repetitions through rhythmic diminution (see Fig. 5). The first two gestures span three measures with one measure of silence. Gestures three and four (mm. 9-12) are without intervening silence, and the latter is a gesture of rhythmic variation, defying expectation of regularity through a tied quarter note into its second measure and foreshadowing a like gesture in mm. 19-20. Thereafter, in mm. 13-18, the gesture repeats regularly at two-measure intervals, creating the soundscape against the next portion of the A section will develop.

Figure 5. Opening “Ori” motive (mm. 1-3)

The musical score for the opening "Ori" motive (mm. 1-3) is presented for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The time signature is 4/4. The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics "O - - - - - ri,". The dynamics are marked *pp* (pianissimo) at the start and *p* (piano) at the end, with a crescendo hairpin. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a "quasi niente" marking at the end. The Alto and Bass parts are silent in the first measure and enter in the second measure with a half note G and a half note B.

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Measures 19 through 37 develop through expansion and thickening of texture. In mm. 19-23, the soprano two voice presents the first monodic line of the work. It consists of repeated motivic material spanning only the space of a major third, G to B, and consists of repeated sixteenth notes. Later, in mm. 23-27, the line splits into dyadic form, now outlining the space of a fifth, E to B. This passage is based on a short motive, three sixteenths in length, which repeats through measure 27. Because of the motive's length,

it produces a contradiction of metric pulse.⁷⁹ In measures 19-24, the E pitch introduced in the dyadic passage is absorbed into the soprano one voice in m. 25, which then introduces C and D, further expanding the motive's breadth. In bar 28, rhythmic diminution in the soprano one voice causes a period of parallel F- and G-major triads. These triads represent a general thickening of the texture, which combined with motivic expansion, lead to a homophonic transitional passage at m. 38, "Veni." Further, the rate of harmonic change in the lower voices doubles in m. 25, which creates a sense of relative instability and pushes development forward. A similar thickening of texture with a homophonic shift occurs in "Herr, unser Herrscher" from mm. 47-57. Figure 6 traces the melodic and harmonic change in this passage.

Figure 6. Melodic and harmonic development in mm. 19-37 of "Villarosa Sariaidi"

m. 19

⁷⁹ This contradiction of pulse is similar to mm. 40-41 in "Herr, unser Herrscher," wherein the quarter note exclamations of "Herr" occur on beats two and four, contradicting the metrical pulse.

m. 25

25

p *mf*

S1 o - - - ri

S2 di, a - vi - di, a - vi - di, a - vi - di, a - vi - di, a - vi - di,

A *pp* *mf* o - - - ri

T o - - - ri

B o - - - ri

m. 32

32

(Ah)

(Ah)

A a - - - no,

T a - - - no,

B a - - - no,

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Section B (mm. 42-87) develops at first at a leisurely pace, and relies not on motivic expansion, but sudden shifts in pulse rate, use of *accelerando*, highly contrasting intervening passages, and a wide dynamic range. In general, mm. 42-60 develop almost hesitantly; even as motivic alteration is introduced, it is twice interrupted by the previous

form. Measures 42-49 contain a fully homophonic section with half-bar pulse and harmonic shifts that occur every two measures. The major second (D to E) in the soprano voice, a highly consonant interval in Jennefelt's view, marks a period of repose. At m. 50, that half note homophonic gesture is altered to a melodic one, spanning three eighth notes, rather than four ("Sari"). After a return to pure homophony (the primary soprano motive), the melodic motive in altered form is reintroduced as a string of eighth notes, this time resembling the opening soprano two motive from section A. At m. 56, the second motivic alteration replaces the third for two bars. At m. 58, the third modification prevails for two bars, and is replaced by an oscillating gesture, still based on pitches D and E. At this time, an *accelerando* is initiated that, over the course of sixteen measures, doubles the tempo, creating a gradual sense of diminution over this period that transcends the fixed values of eighths and sixteenths. At m. 62, the pulse rate in the lower voices doubles to the quarter-note level, and periods of dramatic crescendo juxtaposed with *subito piano* or *pianissimo* directions build tension through m. 77. Two, three-bar homophonic gestures occur in mm. 78 and 83. They provide contrast through larger note values and a *subito piano* dynamic, which is pitted against the prevailing fortissimo dynamic and driving quarter- and eighth-notes of the surrounding measures. Figure 7 traces the melodic and harmonic development throughout this section.

Figure 7. Melodic and harmonic development in mm. 42-87 of “Villarosa Sariaidi”

Opening homophonic gesture (m. 44)

44 *sempre sim.*

S
sa-o, sa-o,

A

T
sempre sim.
sa-o, sa-o,

B

Detailed description: This musical score shows measures 44 and 45. The Soprano (S) and Tenor (T) parts are marked with a box containing the number 44 and the instruction 'sempre sim.'. Both parts sing the lyrics 'sa-o, sa-o,'. The Alto (A) and Bass (B) parts provide harmonic support with chords. The Soprano and Tenor parts are in treble clef, while the Alto and Bass parts are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

mm. 50. Introduction of eighth-note motive.

50 $\text{♩} = 56$
p

S
sa - ri, sa - ri,

A
(ppp)
sa-o, sa-o,

T
sa-o, sa-o,

B

Detailed description: This musical score shows measures 50 and 51. Measure 50 is marked with a box containing the number 50, a tempo marking '♩ = 56', and a dynamic marking 'p'. The Soprano (S) part has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, with lyrics 'sa - ri, sa - ri,'. The Alto (A) part is marked with a box containing the number 50 and a dynamic marking '(ppp)', with lyrics 'sa-o, sa-o,'. The Tenor (T) and Bass (B) parts provide harmonic support with chords. The Soprano and Tenor parts are in treble clef, while the Alto and Bass parts are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Further diminution in the soprano voice (m. 54)

54 $\text{♩} = 60$
mp
 S sa-ri-al-di, sa-ri-al-di,
 A saO, saO,
 T saO, saO,
 B saO, saO,

Diminution in lower voices with accelerando (m. 62)

62 $\text{♩} = 66$
tutti:
pp
 S vil-la-ro-sa sa-ri-al-di
 A Ah Ah Ah Ah
 T Ah Ah Ah Ah
 B Ah Ah Ah Ah

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The transitional B-section material from mm. 88-95 is marked by sudden textural contraction (the men's voices are removed), but motivic expansion. The oscillation between D and E so prevalent in the previous section is here stretched to F and to G, with rhythmic shift to full-measure triplets (see Fig. 8).

Figure 8. Textural contraction (mm. 88-91)

88 *pp legato molto* *non dim.*

S in - tre - vi fa - la - vi no,

A

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Triplets provide a natural sense of tension against the regular pulse, but in the shadow of a large section of ostinato-like duple gestures, they add incredible tension. Introduced here, they will reappear later in the work. The expansion to G is important for two reasons. First, it portends the eventual goal of A in m. 151, but it does not appear again in the same pitch class in the soprano voice until that time. Its absence produces a sense of expectation that pervades the following section. Secondly, the addition of F and G to the previous section's D and E creates the pitch collection used in the next section's soprano duet.

Measure 96 marks the start of section C (mm. 96-129), and is marked to a return to a rather slow tempo (quarter equals 56). Measures 96-99 form a short transition passage that expand texture to include the basses, and through a modified version of the motive from m. 19, reintroduce B-flat and introduce E-flat, which direct the piece to G dorian, which endured throughout this section (see exs. 9 and 10).

Figure 9. Transitional passage (mm. 96-99)

A - ri - ma - lo - ri - o, a - ri - ma - lo - ri - o

p Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

p Ah

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Jennefelt offers a sudden densification of texture in m. 100 through closed chord structures in the lower range of the alto, tenor, and bass voices. This highly dense texture in quarter-note pulsation is in great contrast to the ensuing legato soprano dyads, which move in parallel sevenths, based upon the pitches provided in the previous section.

Figure 10. Textural densification and g-dorian shift (m. 100)

S

pp Oh Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh

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Development here shares some likeness with the development of the B-section, in that motivic alterations are offered briefly, replaced by a previous state before being reintroduced, and altered again. Initially, the soprano duet consists of alternating passages of dotted quarters and eighths followed by a string of eighth notes reminiscent of the soprano gesture in m. 50. Later, in mm. 106-107, the duet is reduced to even eighth notes, while the lower voices shift to a d-minor harmony in whole notes for two measures. Harmonic change, which occurs after every two measures, remains constant. The initial motivic material returns unchanged in mm. 108-111, supported by g-minor harmony pulsed at the quarter-note level. In mm. 112-114, the eighth-note theme returns for only three measures, its length made irregular by transitional gesture in mm. 115-117 that is comparable in rhythmic content to the one in mm. 38-40. The irregularity of the preceding three-measure phrase is reflected in the dotted quarter and eighth motive in mm. 115-116, which feels unstable in light of the rhythmic regularity in the section that preceded it. Further, the sudden thinning of texture from mm. 114-115 produces further instability. Tenor and bass voices, once occupying triads in the lower range, now occupy single pitches in the middle range. Alto voices, once occupying a triad, take over the lower duet voice. The “Via” motives are inversions of minor and major seconds, respectively, which relates them to the initial motivic gesture of a major second and displays both invention and continuity. Figure 11 displays the prevailing textures in this portion of the work, as well as the “Via” transitional motive.

Figure 11. Prevailing textures and transition (mm. 100-117)

Texture 1 (mm. 108-109)

Figure 11 displays two musical textures. Texture 1 (mm. 108-109) is a four-part vocal setting. The Soprano (S) part begins at measure 108 with the lyrics "a - ri - ma lo - ti - di - an - te fo - rum. ____". The Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts enter in measure 109 with the lyrics "Oh Oh Oh Oh" and "sempre sim.". The texture is marked *pp* (pianissimo).

Texture 2 (mm. 112)

Figure 12 displays a musical texture for measure 112. The Soprano (S) part has the lyrics "lo - cus, lo - cus vi - a - no - vo". The Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts have the lyrics "Ah". The texture is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Transitional “Via, novo via” (mm. 115-117)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The music is in 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'vi - a no - vo vi - a'. The Soprano and Alto parts have a melodic line with a half note, a quarter note, and a half note. The Tenor and Bass parts have a simple harmonic line with a half note, a quarter note, and a half note. The lyrics are 'vi - a no - vo vi - a'.

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Measures 118-129 serve as a large-scale, static homophonic transitional gesture recalling both old ideas and introducing short periods of rhythmic variation. Forward development is aided by accelerated harmonic change, which now occurs at the downbeat of each measure. All voices pulse at the eighth-note level throughout this section, with two exceptions. In m. 122, half-bar triplets recall the gesture in m. 88, and in mm. 124-125, Jennefelt introduces new rhythmic material that offers an effect similar to that of the triplet gesture, but through syncopation. Finally, m. 127 marks an instance of slight rhythmic variation, as the previously regular harmonic shift occurs on the second eighth note. Overall, mm. 118-129 serve as an extended period of repose, as the pervading rhythm remains relatively constant, texture is consistent, and there is no motivic development beyond the half-step motion (A to B-flat) in the soprano voice. The static nature of the passage stands in heavy contrast to the final portion of the piece, which

combines techniques previously utilized. Figure 12 displays the musical material from this section.

Figure 12. Motivic content (mm. 118-129)

Homophonic texture with one-measure harmonic rhythm (mm. 118-119)

Figure 12 displays a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score is in 4/4 time and features a homophonic texture with a one-measure harmonic rhythm. The lyrics are "vi - a no - vo". The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics, while the Alto and Bass parts are instrumental. The Soprano and Tenor parts are in treble clef, and the Alto and Bass parts are in bass clef. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a key signature of one flat (Bb). The Alto and Bass parts have a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The Soprano and Tenor parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Alto and Bass parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Alto and Bass parts have a common time signature of 4/4.

Triplets recalling previous use (m. 122)

Figure 13 displays a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score is in 4/4 time and features triplets in measure 122. The lyrics are "in - tre - vi - fa - la - vi". The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics, while the Alto and Bass parts are instrumental. The Soprano and Tenor parts are in treble clef, and the Alto and Bass parts are in bass clef. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a key signature of one flat (Bb). The Alto and Bass parts have a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The Soprano and Tenor parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Alto and Bass parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a common time signature of 4/4. The Alto and Bass parts have a common time signature of 4/4.

Gesture of syncopation (m. 125)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The music is in 4/4 time. The Soprano and Alto parts have a syncopated melody starting on the second beat of the measure. The Tenor and Bass parts have a more regular melody. The lyrics 'lo-cus et sam-ban-di' are written below the notes.

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The B' section (mm. 130-155) is the most exciting in its development, for it recalls musical material from previous sections, and evolves through a combination several techniques discovered in previous sections. Measures 130-133 exemplify another homophonic transitional gesture, establishing the subdominant key area. The chordal relationship that endures here and throughout this section shares the relationship of a major third, which recalls the same intervallic relationship in the work's opening measures. Harmonic change occurs at the half bar, with a small moment of rhythmic variation in m. 133, which propels the section forward into the development phase. Also of note in this section is the repeated D in the soprano voice that, as the section unfolds, takes on a prominent role reminiscent of that in mm. 47-87 (see Fig. 13).

Figure 13. Homophonic introduction to B' section (mm. 130)



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Texture in m. 134 briefly acknowledges the aforementioned, Baroque-inspired dualism found in other sections (harmonic support of a monodic line), and is relatively light. As in the a-section, the soprano-two voice introduces a running sixteenth note gesture, which recalls that which begins in m. 19. In this iteration, however, the line adopts a decidedly broader range, covering a full octave (D to D) by the end of m. 135. At m. 137, Jennefelt introduces syncopation in the outer voices, an early indication of instability. Harmonic change continues at the half-bar, but by m. 139, rhythmic diminution is introduced, with outer voices pulsing at the quarter note level. Already, considerable density has been employed. While the octave-wide venture executed by the second sopranos has been reduced in later measures to the span of a fifth (E to B-flat), continued densification of texture adds developmental interest. At m. 142, beat three, the outer voices again double their rate of pulsation to the eighth note level. At m. 146, the

soprano two voice adopts a duetting in thirds, recalling the analogous gesture in m. 29. However, in place of simple oscillation, this gesture is one of upward and downward motion arranged in couplets and spanning a minor seventh (C to B-flat). Figure 14 outlines development in this section.

Figure 14. Development (mm. 134-145)

Light accompaniment of monodic line in S2 voice (m. 134)

Figure 14 shows a musical score for measures 134-145. The score includes five vocal parts: S1 (Soprano 1), S2 (Soprano 2), A (Alto), T (Tenor), and B (Bass). The lyrics for S1 and A are "no - - - vo,". The lyrics for S2 are "A - ri - ma - lo - ri, lo - ri - o - sa". The lyrics for T and B are "no - - - vo,". The S2 part has a "poco f" marking. The score is in 4/4 time and features a monodic line in S2 with a light accompaniment.

Rhythmic diminution at the quarter-note level in supporting voices (m. 141)

Figure 141 shows a musical score for measure 141. The score includes five vocal parts: S1 (Soprano 1), S2 (Soprano 2), A (Alto), T (Tenor), and B (Bass). The lyrics for S1, A, T, and B are "Ah Ah Ah Ah". The lyrics for S2 are "Ah". The score is in 4/4 time and features a rhythmic diminution at the quarter-note level in the supporting voices.

Rhythmic diminution at the eighth-note level, S2 duet (m. 147)

147 *accelerando e crescendo* -----
mf
S1 (Ah)
S2 (Ah)
A *mf* (Ah)
T (Ah)
B

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Measures 148 to 151 contain further textural thickening and are the most dramatic in the entire work. While the soprano duet continues into m. 148, it is at the downbeat of this measure that the final motivic alteration takes place ahead of the apogee in m. 151. The soprano one's motivic material, hitherto confined to a repeated D, expands to the range of a third (D to F), recalling the gesture that expanded a similar soprano motive to G in in mm. 86-88. This gesture repeats twelve times, undergirded by eighth-note pulsation in the lower voices and the repeated duet pattern in the second soprano voice. Further transformation and drama ensue through the *accelerando* and *crescendo* beginning in m. 147, the former again serving as its own vehicle of diminution and functioning in a manner not unlike *stretto*, and the latter adding dramatic force. Measure 151 contains the motivic and dramatic apogee of the work, as the A is finally absorbed into the sopranos motivic material; however, this outburst is short-lived. Jennefelt

immediately reduces texture by abruptly ending the lower voices' pulsation in that measure and calling for a sudden *piano* dynamic and *molto ritardando*. One bar later, the inner voices have been eliminated. Recalling again the duality in Baroque music and that seen throughout this piece, the bass voice provides harmonic support of a simple soprano line that oscillates within the range of a semitone. In m. 154, the bass line is reduced to a single note, and the outburst recedes into nothing, ending on a brief unison A. The “Lao” gesture, built on the diatonic a-scale, unites all movements of the *Villarosa sequences*, and according to Jennefelt, serves as a mantra when one hears the complete cycle performed in succession.⁸⁰ Figure 15 outlines development in this section.

Figure 15. Development (mm. 148-155)

First soprano motivic expansion and apogee. Initiation of textural reduction. (m. 150-151)

The musical score for Figure 15 shows measures 150 and 151. Measure 150 is marked with '(acc. e cresc.)' and a tempo of '♩ = 80'. Measure 151 is marked with 'molto rit.' and a dynamic of 'ff'. The score is for five voices: S1, S2, A, T, and B. The lyrics 'Ah' are written below the notes for S1, S2, A, T, and B. The score shows a complex texture in measure 150 that is reduced in measure 151.

⁸⁰ Jennefelt, Interview.

Textural reduction (m. 152 and 155)

152 *mf*

S Ah
(Ah)

B (Ah)

155

S (Ah)

A

T

B (Ah) *q.n.*

“Lao” (m. 157)

S lao,

A

T lao,

B

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Finally, one must consider the full impact of the work of Steve Reich on the overall structure of “Villarosa serialdi.” Jennefelt indicates that the layering process, or the process of adding or subtracting density from texture found in Reich’s works, was instrumental in the development of the cycle.⁸¹ In the author’s interview with the composer, the early percussive works of Reich are mentioned, as are projects with other musicians in New York involving multiple electric guitars and basses, as sources of influence. Struck by the final unison in m. 115 of “Villarosa serialdi,” the present author recalled Reich’s discussion of *It’s Gonna Rain* (1965), in which he describes the canonic relationship created by two identical recordings looping at slightly different speeds. Reich describes the discovery as “a process [that] was a series of rhythmically flexible canons at the unison, beginning and ending in rhythmic unison.”⁸² In a similar fashion, overall structure in Jennefelt’s work develops out of rhythmic unison, experiences expansion, contraction, and gradual change, and returns to the state from which it came.

Swedish Choral Tradition

After exposure to the history of choral development in Sweden, one becomes aware of the multifaceted route that led to the codification of choral aesthetic there. Many choral musicians refer to that aesthetic as the “sound body,”⁸³ the summation of the

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² William Duckworth, *Talking Music: Conversations with John Cage, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, and Five Generations of American Experimental Composers* (New York: Schirmer, 1995), 297.

⁸³ Reimers, “A Cappella,” 181.

choral experience for the choral singers themselves. While Reimers admits the concept is prone to vagaries, the breadth of definition attempts to capture the intuitive experience that occurs within a specifically Swedish sound body. Many authors, including Ternström,⁸⁴ Stenbäck,⁸⁵ and Alldahl⁸⁶ have attempted to capture the experience of being inside a Swedish choral ensemble with quantitative acoustic evidence to be used in the course of actual choral training.

Contrarily, in his 1993 contribution to *Choral Music Perspectives*, Reimers attempts to qualitatively capture what it means to produce the Swedish sound body. He submits six elements of that sound body: intonationalism, pianissism, non-vibratism, aliquotism, consentism, and precisionism.⁸⁷ In her interviews with choral conductors in Sweden, Stenbäck was repeatedly informed that the highest aim of choral singers in Sweden is to achieve perfection in overtone intonation.⁸⁸ As Alldahl remarks in his *Choral intonation*, an entire volume devoted to the matter,⁸⁹ one must “intone different

⁸⁴ Ternstrom, Sten. "Acoustical Aspects of Choir Singing." (Ph.D. diss., Kungliga Tekniska Hogskolan, 1989).

⁸⁵ Helena Stenbäck, “Svensk körpedagogik I ett kammarmusikaliskt perspektiv” (Master’s Thesis, Stockholms Universitet, 1992).

⁸⁶ Per-Gunnar Alldahl, *Choral intonation* (Stockholm: Gehrmans Musikförlag AB, 2008).

⁸⁷ Reimers, “A Cappella,” 182-183.

⁸⁸ Helena Stenbäck, “Svensk körpedagogik I ett kammarmusikaliskt perspektiv” (Swedish Choir Pedagogy in a Chamber Music Perspective). (Master’s Thesis, Centrum för Musikpedagogisk forskning, Musikhögskolan I Stockholm and Stockholms Universitet, 1992, in Reimers, “A Cappella,” 182.

intervals in such a way that the partials in a note's overtone series can as closely as possible coincide with the other partials in the chord. It will then sound 'in tune'." One might summarize the demands of the Swedish sound body like so: choristers must relinquish all qualities of the voice that do not serve the larger sound to achieve the intended musical gesture.

Pianissism is a quality of choral singing in Sweden that began to gain footing in the early 1900s, and is likely a product of Cecilian interest in early music and its unique demands. That is not to say that fuller singing was completely absent from Sweden; until, full-bodied singing was common even into the era of Ericson,⁹⁰ surely a product of the romanticism that continued to pervade the musical world. Larger works for chorus and orchestra were prominent during that era, whereas smaller, a cappella works came to dominate as the century wore on. Eric Ericson, his contemporaries, and successive generations of choral conductors promote this choral pedagogy. Jennefelt believes Ericson's soft touch at the piano also finds its way into the choral sound in this way.⁹¹ Finally, a mixed standing arrangement is considered conducive to both overtone intonation and pianissism.

Non-vibratism, or "straight tone" singing, is another element of the Swedish sound body. It is widely accepted, however, that a perceived straight tone is a product of

⁸⁹ Per-Gunnar Alldahl, *Körintonation* (Stockholm: Gehrmans Musikförlag, 1990), in Reimers, "A Cappella," 182.

⁹⁰ Jennefelt, E-mail message to author.

⁹¹ Jennefelt, Interview.

voice placement and listening, not necessarily a vocal technique. That is, choral singers always aim to strike a balance between listening to the ensemble and listening to themselves. Ternström presents three sorts of vocalism: dispersal, trembling, and a combination of the two.⁹² Dispersal describes variance in vibrato amplitude or scope (pitch range) among singers in the same voice section or section of the choir. Trembling describes a unification of vibratory variations in pitch, and a combination of dispersal and trembling, or trembling at different frequencies, helps create a perceived sense of non-vibratism, which in concert with pianissism, helps promote intonationalism. This technique shares commonalities with English choral aesthetic (which also produces a perceived straight tone, yet even choir boys utilize vibrato), as evidenced in interviews with English choral conductors in Jeffrey Sandborg's *English Ways*.⁹³

The concepts of aliquotism (partialism), consentism, and precisionism are practiced in Swedish choirs. Individual singers must renounce the particular acoustic personality of their voices in favor of an aim for the purest unison possible, down to the overtones and their relative strengths. Reimers calls this “acoustic socialization,” the concept of which, though outside the purview of this study, merits further investigation.⁹⁴ Consentism describes a sort of articulatory socialism, or the shared consent among choral artists to achieve an absolutely uniform execution of consonant sounds in both timing and

⁹² Sven Ternström, "Acoustical Aspects of Choir Singing," (PhD diss, Kungliga Tekniska Hogskolan 1989), cited in Reimers, "A Cappella," 183.

⁹³ Jeffrey Sandborg, *English Ways: Conversations with English Choral Conductors* (Chapel Hill: Hinshaw, 2001).

⁹⁴ Reimers, "A Cappella," 183.

character. A third sort of choral socialization is to be found in rhythmic precisionism. Some choral conductors, like Ericson, concede that this precision was imbued through repertorial contact—that is, as Swedish composers produced repertoire of increasing difficulty, major choral ensembles rose to the challenges at hand. Others owe this precision to the cultivation of Cecilian ideals, and specifically, with the performance of madrigals, which were among the first works performed by the Eric Ericson's Chamber Choir.⁹⁵ Ericson himself has remarked that in the course of the Radio and Chamber Choirs' development, “‘if a new sound arrived...it was as a result of the structure of the music performed.’”⁹⁶

Upon close examination of the score, that Jennefelt's “Villarosa Sariaidi” is a product of the Swedish choral tradition and, further, that it relies on an amalgam of the elements of the sound body, becomes patently clear. While the piece relies on each of those elements at all times, the following review highlights selected passages that distinctly call for one or more of those elements in greater measure.

First, one must consider the opening motive, which is repeated by all voices seven times (Fig. 16).

⁹⁵ Sparks, *Choral Miracle*, 21.

⁹⁶ Reimers, “A *Cappella*,” 184.

Figure 16. Opening motive

The musical score shows four staves for voices S, A, T, and B. The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics 'O - - - - - ri,'. The dynamics are marked *pp* at the beginning, *p* in the middle, and *quasi niente* at the end. The Alto and Bass parts have a parallel-fifth motion in the bass line.

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Each iteration requires a *messa di voce* that grows from pianissimo over eight beats, trailing away over four to *quasi niente*. The added seventh in the alto voice and the parallel-fifth motion in the bass line are additional vocal challenges. The value of pianissimo is also apparent in the *messa di voce* passages, which occupy only the dynamic range between *quasi niente* and *piano*. Non-vibratism, aliquotism, consentism, and precisionism are also necessary here. For the added-seventh dissonance to be appropriately delivered, choristers must operate with a vibrato of high frequency and low amplitude.

As the piece progresses, more reliance on the Swedish sound body presents itself. The importance of consentism and precisionism become apparent as Jennefelt begins to layer more active motivic material about the ostinato that continues in the lower voices. The soprano two passage beginning at m. 19 benefits from these elements of the sound

body in terms of rhythmic precision and proper placement of phonemic elements(Fig. 17).

Figure 17. Soprano-two melisma (m. 19)

Figure 17 shows a musical score for five voices (S1, S2, A, T, B) in measure 19. The score is for a melisma. S1 and A have a melisma on the word 'o' in measure 19, marked with 'pp' and a long horizontal line. S2 has a melisma on the word 'di' in measure 19, marked with 'mp' and a long horizontal line. The lyrics for S2 are 'o - - - ri vi-di a-no-o-ri vi - - - di'. The other voices (A, T, B) have a melisma on the word 'o' in measure 19, marked with 'pp' and a long horizontal line. The lyrics for A, T, and B are 'o - - - - - - - -'.

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Additionally, when the soprano one voice enters in m. 28, the accurate performance of parallel F-major and G-major triads, even as the undulation between a minor and F major continues below (Fig. 18), is benefitted by intonationalism, as well.

Figure 18. Parallel triads (m. 18)

The musical score for Figure 18 shows five vocal parts: Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The time signature is 4/4. Soprano 1 and Alto have lyrics 'a - no,'. Soprano 2 has a melisma 'Ah'. Tenor and Bass have lyrics 'a - no'. Dynamics range from *p* to *mf*. The score illustrates parallel triads in measure 18.

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The second portion of the piece (mm. 42-87) again relies on the qualities of the Swedish choral sound body. As in the first portion of the piece, harmonic motion oscillates between two chordal areas. Intonation challenges stem from the closed construction of the initial chord cluster, which contains eight pitches within the span of a twelfth. A d-minor chord follows in more open form with added second, but voicing creates intonational interest for the tenor and soprano voices especially, which occupy transitional areas in the voice divided by only a major second. Tenors move in parallel major seconds, while only a major second apart, in the passaggio area. “Sao,” which Jennefelt notes is an homage to the choral sound propagated by Alfvén,⁹⁷ calls for an

⁹⁷ Jennefelt, Interview.

emphasis on [o], which for the first tenors and first sopranos may require a delicate, balanced motion in and out of the *passaggio* to achieve and maintain proper resonance (see Fig. 19). A mastery of pianissism is an aid in achieving the proper effect.

Figure 19. Vowel color shift (m. 42)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The time signature is 4/4. The Soprano and Tenor parts are in treble clef, while the Alto and Bass parts are in bass clef. The Soprano and Tenor parts are marked with *ppp* and have lyrics 'sao, sao,'. The Alto and Bass parts are marked with *ppp* and have lyrics 'sao, sao'. The Soprano and Tenor parts have a vowel color shift indicated by a > symbol above the notes.

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Dynamic markings through that passage, namely a repeated *ppp* attack followed by a decrescendo, benefit from the concept of pianissism. With a long-standing focus on the integrity of quiet singing, as espoused by Ericson,⁹⁸ Swedish choirs are equipped to render it. Consentism and precisionism prevail in moments rhythmic diminution, as half notes give way to quarter notes, which are made all the more brief by an *accelerando*. Intonationalism is again of importance, as short, rearticulated pitches at the same, difficult pitch class for tenors and sopranos must occur throughout the range of dynamics

⁹⁸ Ibid.

from pianissimo to fortissimo. Repeated vowel onsets rely on consentism and precisionism; additionally, aliquotism and non-vibratism are of the utmost importance in this section, as homogenous sound and rhythmic accuracy are vital to the executing this passage effectively (Fig. 20).

Figure 20. Repeated vowel onsets (mm. 63-64)

The musical score for Figure 20 is written for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The time signature is 4/4. The Soprano part is in treble clef and has lyrics 'vil - la - ro - sa, vil - la - ro - sa Ah' with dynamics *mf* and *p*. The Alto part is in treble clef and has lyrics 'Ah Ah sempre sim'. The Tenor part is in treble clef and has lyrics 'Ah Ah sempre sim'. The Bass part is in bass clef and has lyrics 'Ah Ah sempre sim'. The score shows repeated vowel onsets for each part.

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Measures 100-117 present various examples of reliance on the Swedish sound body, both for the corporate ensemble, and for the lower three parts and sopranos separately. The transition in m. 100 to the subtonic dorian mode relies on intonationalism, especially given the basses' leap of downward ninth. The passage at m. 100 requires a strong command of all six elements of the Swedish sound body: intonationalism and non-vibratism to produce a proper alignment of pitch and relative strength of overtone, and consentism and precisionism to produce unified and properly timed vowel onsets. The closely-packed chordal structure that Jennefelt has selected in

the lower voices relies on aliquotism for a cleanly produced choral tone in a relatively low register (Fig. 21).

Figure 21. Closely-packed chordal structure (m. 100)

S

A *pp*
Oh Oh Oh Oh

T
8 Oh Oh Oh Oh

B
Oh Oh Oh Oh

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Intonationalism becomes of especial import in m. 106 and 112 as the lower voices transition to stacked d-minor triads (Fig. 22). The considerations mentioned above endure through this transition, as well.

Figure 22. Stacked d-minor triads (m. 112)

112

S lo - cus, lo - cus vi - a - no - vo

A *mp* Ah

T *mp* Ah

B Ah

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Jennefelt calls for an immediate decrescendo in the lower voices, indicating reliance on pianissism. Furthermore, that sopranos navigate the same passage within a differing harmonic context indicates reliance on intonationalism. The transition occurs twice more, offering no time for a calculated shift in intonation. Additionally, the short transitional passage in mm. 115-117 relies on intonationalism, with soprano and alto voices leaping in parallel sevenths. Execution must be within a mezza di voce dynamic of pianissimo-to-mezzo-forte breadth, indicating reliance on pianissism, as well (Fig. 23).

Figure 23. Mezza di voce/leap of seventh (mm. 116-117)

116 *pp* *<mf>* *pp* *<mf>*

S no - vo vi - a,

A

T no vi

B

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Measures 118-129 mark a return to pulsating rhythm, and require rhythmic precisionism and intonationalism in particular. Close dissonances in the inner voices achieved by simultaneous stepwise motion and leap of major and minor third rely on the latter, as well as aliquotism to achieve the sound mass effect of the chord cluster (mm. 118-119, Fig. 24).

Figure 24. Inner voice dissonance (mm. 118-119)

p

Alto vi - a no - vo

Tenor no - vo

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Measures 130 through 150 mark a return to the subdominant key area of d minor and are built on the oscillating motion of a major third (d to B-flat) as found in the introduction of the piece (a to F). Of note in this passage is the repetition of pitches and varying vowel colors and throughout the dynamic range from *piano* to *fortissimo*. The second-soprano voice, whose perpetual melismatic motion against the steady pulse of the other three voices, depends on the Swedish sound body elements of consentism and precisionism (Fig. 25).

Figure 25. Second-soprano melisma (m. 134)

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As tension builds throughout mm. 141-150 through rhythmic diminution, *accelerando*, and *crescendo*, all elements of the sound body are of import. Intonationalism reigns beginning in m. 148, where repeated soprano one ascents burst forth into a *fortissimo*. Second sopranos leap directly from D4 and F4 to A5. All this occurs within the context of the *accelerando* Jennefelt requests, which calls for precisionism and consentism.

Elements of pianissism endure through mm. 151-152, as soprano and bass voices retreat from the *fortissimo* climax to *niente* within a few measures (Fig. 26).

Figure 26. Apogee (mm. 150-151, 155)

Figure 26 shows a musical score for five vocal parts (S1, S2, A, T, B) across measures 150, 151, and 155. The score is marked with 'acc. e cresc.' and 'ff' in measures 150 and 151, and 'molto rit.' and 'sfz p' in measure 155. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 80. The lyrics 'Ah' are written under the notes. The score shows a transition from a fortissimo climax to a pianissimo state.

Figure 27 shows a musical score for four vocal parts (S, A, T, B) in measure 155. The score is marked with 'q.n.'. The lyrics '(Ah)' are written under the notes. The score shows a transition from a fortissimo climax to a pianissimo state.

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The “Lao” that follows in m. 157 relies on all six elements of the Swedish sound body (Fig. 27). While this diatonic sound mass is built on the tonic, its initiation from pure silence requires absolute precision in pitch, dynamic, vowel and color.

Figure 27. Lao (m. 159)

The image shows a musical score for four vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics 'lao,' are written under the Soprano and Tenor staves. The music is written in a single system with four staves. The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics 'lao,' written below them. The Alto and Bass parts do not have lyrics. The music is written in a single system with four staves. The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics 'lao,' written below them. The Alto and Bass parts do not have lyrics. The music is written in a single system with four staves. The Soprano and Tenor parts have lyrics 'lao,' written below them. The Alto and Bass parts do not have lyrics.

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CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION OF ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

After examination of “Villarosa sarialdi” in the context above, it seems clear that a long history of unaccompanied, mixed-voice singing, extraordinary government support of the arts, a natural inclination toward choral singing at a high level, and years of increasingly difficult choral repertoire throughout the latter half of the twentieth century from composers closely linked to the art form, among other influences, have given birth to a piece that is intimately tied to Swedish choral culture. One finds those ties in the its various stylistic influences and technical demands.

Influences from the Baroque and specifically the opening chorus of Bach’s *St. John Passion* are visible in Jennefelt’s work in conception, architectural design, use of similar key areas, similar motivic content, expressive textural variation, enduring affect, and rates of harmonic change. First, Bach’s vocal writing is instrumentally conceived, as is Jennefelt’s work,⁹⁹ which utilizes vocal color as an expressive tool. Next, both works are in arch form and even share common characteristics at the substructural level, such as introductory passages of equal length and character, equal length in sections A and B, and use of coda-like passages to link subsections. Key areas are also shared between both works, with the exception of E-flat major and f minor, which occur in Bach. Motivic

⁹⁹ Jennefelt, Interview.

content is also similar, as exemplified by opening contrapuntal gestures in each work that share like contour.

Textural commonalities are also present, as Jennefelt emulates the dualistic texture of Bach's chorus in which monodic lines are anchored by harmonic underpinning. Both composers utilize textural thickening in moments of great drama. Bach relies on stretto in such cases, while Jennefelt makes use of rhythmic diminution and accelerando to achieve a similar end. Juxtaposition and superimposition of textures create highly dramatic moments in each work. Tenets of the Baroque doctrine of affections, particularly that of enduring character, are present in both Jennefelt and Bach, as well. Such character is achieved in Bach through the use of only two main musical gestures, and lengthy expositional passages grounded in one tonal area. Developmental passages rely often on close key relationships at the fifth. Jennefelt achieves affekt through the utilization of two chordal areas in each section, which alter only as rapidly as twice per measure. Key relationships between sections, like those in the Bach, are related by fifth. Furthermore, the rate of harmonic change in both works is generally slow, and altered sparingly. Acceleration of harmonic change is used expressively in both works to increase tension.

Next, influences of American minimalism and the work of Steve Reich prevail in "Villarosa sarialdi," and many tenets of that compositional style, at least as it pertains to Jennefelt's piece, overlap with Bach's influence. For example, minimalistic style relies on slow development over time, and this philosophy is visible in "Villarosa sarialdi" in its slow motivic alteration, but also in textural expansion, contraction, thickening, and

thinning. As mentioned, the last three elements are shared with Bach's work. Slow motivic alteration is not equally present in the Bach, but basic motivic material in the Jennefelt is inspired by it. One must also remember the tape works of Reich, such as *Come Out* or *It's Gonna Rain*. Each opens with an introductory passage that presents the loop, and a canon at an initial rhythmic unison develops over time to create expansive texture, which later recedes back into rhythmic unison and thin texture. The same general shape exists in each section of Jennefelt's work. These varied and disparate influences serve together in the achievement of Jennefelt's greatest aim—to produce works of both dramatic intensity and simplicity of expression.¹⁰⁰

The technical demands of Jennefelt's work rely on the tenets of the Swedish sound body and choral tradition, often calling for numerous, varied, and simultaneous elements of expression from the voices, all the while relying on the utmost precision in intonation for proper, expressive execution of the overarching musical gesture. It comes as no surprise that the works were originally envisioned a project for seven individual ensembles, given those demands. However, when one considers the long history of choral singing in Sweden, and especially its meteoric rise post-WWII, that Swedish choirs are uniquely suited to perform such works is a logical conclusion. The many challenges wrought by the hands of *avant-garde* Swedish composers, their livelihoods and creativity bolstered by the reign of the Monday Group in major schools of music and the Swedish Radio, created ensembles of the highest caliber and repute, whose abilities have since radiated throughout Swedish choral culture as students of Ericson came to

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

dominate the choral scene throughout Sweden. Additionally, the work's multifaceted influences from the Swedish choral tradition and American minimalism in particular may also find roots in a history of foreign influence in Swedish music, and in the role of Stockholm as a center of artistic activity in the twentieth century.

If some Swedish choral conductors advocate that the nature of choral music in Sweden has been the source of the aptitude of its choirs, then it might follow that Jennefelt's work is perhaps not a product of the tradition, but yet another forward-looking work spurring choral literacy. Acknowledgment of Jennefelt's long role in the Radio Choir and Chamber Choir and the influence of that experience would suggest otherwise. After such tenure within those ensembles, he would have been intimately familiar with their fullest array of capabilities. In fact, Jennefelt relates that he wrote the piece with the Ericson choral sound in mind, and maintains that said sound ideal has influenced the *Villarosa Sequences* more than other choral works in his oeuvre.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, the relationship between choral music and choirs was not unidirectional. Indeed, choirs improved vastly as a result of the repertoire presented them by composers who wrote as they saw fit under the auspices of state support. However, two ideas espoused by Eric Ericson call into question the idea that choral singing has been mostly or even somewhat the product of repertoire. In an interview with Leibbrandt, Ericson remarks that he did not embark on a journey to alter the sound, but rather thinks of himself as "the product of some form of national sound."¹⁰² Such an assertion indicates that what has driven choral

¹⁰¹ Thomas Jennefelt, e-mail message to author, May 28, 2012.

¹⁰² Ingrid Leibbrandt. *On the Road to Paradise*, 44.

singing in Sweden is ultimately a natural inclination for singing together, forged by various social, political, and historical forces, among the Swedish people. It is no surprise, given that history, that some 500,000 of nine million Swedes are actively involved in choral singing there. Furthermore, Ericson contends that the reason for the great amount of high quality a cappella choral music produced by Swedish composers was the existence of fine choirs who were sources of inspiration for those composers.¹⁰³ It follows naturally, then, that the relationship between composers, repertoire, and choral singing has been a symbiotic one, but one that stems ultimately from the nationalization of education in the nineteenth century and the standardization of church singing as the first required course in that curriculum.

In conclusion, a long history of choral singing in Sweden, aided by nationalization of education and government subsidization, centralized artistic activity at the highest level, waves of nationalism, interest in early music, widespread participation of the public in the art form, years of dominance by a singularly talented conductor who formed close relationships with composers, and the reign of the Monday Group and modernist aesthetic, has created a nation of tremendous choral standards. While Jennefelt is a member of the post-modern generation of composers, he shares a close relationship with Ericson and was active for many years in the Radio Choir and Chamber choir, therefore possessing intimate knowledge of the voice and the aptitude of Sweden's best choral ensembles, and having first-hand experience with the modernist works that, among other influences, helped bring the Swedish choral "miracle" to life. He has lived that miracle,

¹⁰³ Ibid., 47.

and his “Villarosa sarialdi” is appropriately the fruit of an amalgam of sociocultural, historical, and musical influences.

Therefore, it is clear to see that the work does display elements of each of the asserted influences, but in the end, does any of those influences, singularly or in a concerted fashion, reveal that that work is *patently* Swedish? While not within the purview of this study, an acknowledgement and brief discussion of the nature of the text will help illumine one route to that query’s end. As Werup remarks in his musings about the *Villarosa sequences*, “the singer’s frustration at the music drowning the text (and vice versa) is just as great as that of the audience.”¹⁰⁴ Too often, he suggests, language and its inherent limitations can obscure the more profound meaning within the music itself. Jennefelt, however, in his development and use of a nonsense language, has liberated text from music and music from text, and found a purely musical and expressive use for the phonemes he has selected. The use of a text of this nature, as Werup writes, allows performers of all lingual backgrounds to approach the piece without preconceived notions or associations.¹⁰⁵ Further, the use of a nonsense text may also draw connections to the very social democratic thought that drove the creation of the Rikskonserter and the eclecticism of their musical offerings by equalizing all involved at the language level. Though the textual topic was not of import during the course of this study, it portends one conclusion that might be drawn about “Villarosa sarialdi” with regard to whether it could have been derived from the Swedish choral history and tradition only. As the text can be

¹⁰⁴ Werup, Liner notes, 4.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 4-5.

said to equalize all performers in terms of language association, the work's highly specific, yet universally accessible nature could prevent it from being labeled as patently Swedish.

While its technical requirements benefit enormously from the choral values of its country of origin, it might prove difficult to posit that capable choirs and conductors from other traditions could not intuit the most appropriate manner in which to deliver the piece in performance, or further, that choirs outside the Swedish environment are not capable of executing the work in a technically appropriate manner. Furthermore, were the piece to be stripped of all identifying information, it is highly doubtful that someone would naturally associate it with the choral tradition of Sweden. The values of choral singing in Sweden have in the past several decades been disseminated widely, and even in American choral singing, one finds a growing movement toward a sound ideal more closely related to that of Swedish choirs than to the freely soloist production promulgated in some centers in the twentieth century.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, while one can draw lucid connections between the Swedish tradition and the various elements within it, the work itself does not present itself as patently Swedish simply by way of its technical demands or the ideal sound aesthetic natural to its effective execution.

Next, while its eclecticism may be an outgrowth of the post-modern movement and international eclecticism of the Stockholm music scene, its influences derived from the Baroque are also universal, as interpreted by composer. Logically, the influences of American minimalism are apparent in the piece, but they do not necessarily expose

¹⁰⁶ Alan Zabriskie, "Evolution of Choral Sound of The St. Olaf Choir and the Westminster Choir (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010), iii-iv.

anything particularly Swedish about the work, other than the post-modern movement occurring at the time of its conception.

In the end, one concludes that the discussion of “Villarosa sarialdi” is much like that of other elements of this study, one of nature versus nurture. One recalls firstly the repertoire versus ensemble capability discussion—were Swedish choirs shaped in aptitude by the repertoire given them, or were their capabilities the inspiration of that repertoire? Both answers are promoted within the literature. Secondly, was the Swedish sound ideal itself a natural development over hundreds of years, influenced by cultural values of egalitarianism and corporate being, or was its ultimate incarnation found in the work of a select few conductors’ own values? As mentioned earlier, Ericson contends that his work grew out of a value system already in place. He also acknowledges the role of repertoire in the development of choral sound, even as Jennefelt notes the influence of Ericson’s piano playing on his choral aesthetic. Alternatively, one must consider whether his choral aesthetic, perhaps a product of his experience in the Free Church, first informed his piano playing. Fine keyboard players who are also conductors can of course communicate nuance to a choir in the way in which they perform at the piano. Finally, one must consider that while Jennefelt’s work is certainly the product of years of choral singing and study that the highest levels within the Swedish tradition, it is also the work of an individual artist who makes his own contributions through his creativity to an existing tradition.

Valid arguments exist against the evidence laid out above, as well. For instance, while choirs outside Sweden may intuit the proper manner in which to perform the piece,

it cannot be said that its connection to the Swedish choral tradition is tenuous, especially given Jennefelt's assertion that during the compositional process, he bore the Ericson sound in mind. Simply because the sound ideal is of an aesthetic that has been disseminated widely is not grounds for ignoring the primary source of inspiration. Next, while the piece may not be identified as Swedish were it to be stripped of identifying information, it cannot be said that it is without connection to the period in which it was composed. As mentioned, post-modernism in Sweden brought two separate waves of interest in minimalism, especially in the music of Jennefelt and Hillborg, and that interest is reflected in "Villarosa sarialdi," as evidence by the preceding analysis. Additionally, the idea that the influence of the *St. John* could appear anywhere, while true, ignores that all composers have particular muses derived from favored works or composers. Specifically, Jennefelt relates his interest in the *St. John* derives from his performing it as a young singer,¹⁰⁷ which occurred within the confines of the Swedish choral tradition. When one considers these counterarguments, it is difficult to refute the work's intimate connections with its many Swedish influences. While the product itself may not exhibit those connections upon first glance, the preceding study supplies strong evidence in support of the work's being patently Swedish.

"Villarosa sarialdi" reveals and reflects much about the nature of music, art, Swedish values, and humanity itself. As any work of art, Jennefelt's has evolved not just from a long and storied history of choral singing in Sweden, but also from years of artistic dialogue between individual artists and the aesthetic values of a people. It has

¹⁰⁷ Jennefelt, Interview.

been forged in both the cultural values and the artistry of Jennefelt himself, which has been informed by and informs those values. Its eclecticism in musical style reveals further reveals this great dialogue and amalgam of influences. That Jennefelt chose to set a nonsense text is a natural route for further study, but its very nature, as mentioned, produces simultaneity of individualism and egalitarianism. While all performers are stripped of preconceived notions of or external connections to the text, each will derive varied shades of meaning from the text and the overall work itself, producing a result that is at once individualistic in its roots, yet collectivistic and universal in its incarnation, a reflection of the egalitarianism valued in a society once steered heavily by Socialist thought. Such duality is mirrored in Jennefelt's aim to produce works of simplicity and dramatic intensity, which he handily achieves in the *Villarosa Sequences*. The composer's greatest triumph, though, may lie in giving life to a work that is reflective not only of the myriad values of the society from which it draws influence, but one that is also reflective of universality of all humanity, with the gifts of each individual's contributions weaving an all-encompassing fabric of expression and collective consciousness whose beauty infinitely exceeds the sum of its parts.

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APPENDIX A

JENNEFELT INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Justin Hazelgrove: There are a few sources that I have read about the history of choral singing and its development here through the church, and so on. I have been reading a chapter by Lennart Reimers regarding the history and aesthetics of choral singing in Sweden. In it, he outlines six elements of the Swedish sound body, and what I hope to accomplish is a study of your piece, in part, through that lens. In addition to that, would you say that there is any element of madrigalism?

Thomas Jennefelt: Madrigalism... No... Not in that piece, because in madrigalism there has to be a proper word that means something. But if that is what we mean with madrigalism then it is not, of course, very rare. The way I put words into this music is so backward in a way because I start with the music and then put words to it. I know when I came to a structure that was really calm and sort of – I know that there are some parts where I used the Swedish word to make it even softer, like “vila,” which means rest. When I found that music was really peaceful and calm and restful, I actually used the Swedish word vila and also the Swedish word lindra, which means to stop the pain. That’s not the madrigalism, but it’s the other way around. I use the music as the madrigalism.

Justin Hazelgrove: Does this apply to the majority of the text?

Thomas Jennefelt: It is not so common in the Villarsosa, but I use it. When the structure is hard, I use hard words orchestrate. It is madrigalism of the music instead of the word. I use it because we have it in the choral background. In opera, I use the chord. It’s more theatrical.

Justin Hazelgrove: I wondered about madrigalism in passing because of the independence of line necessary in the piece, and in thinking about how the Chamber Choir began by singing madrigals and Renaissance pieces, thereby developing an independence of voices. What I was thinking was maybe not so much...

Thomas Jennefelt: The word connections at all...

Justin Hazelgrove: Right, but the technical requirements...

Thomas Jennefelt: Of the size of the ensemble or...

Justin Hazelgrove: Or the actual technical requirements posed by independence of these lines.

Thomas Jennefelt: That is interesting because I haven't thought so much about it really. It is more Baroque than madrigal. Perhaps I also feel strange about madrigals... No, it is more – of course, it is quite minimalistic, but it is also Baroque music vocally. For instance, if you compared, I was in Germany this weekend and in a sort of seminar where we talked about new music and new choir music and somebody said very truly, “why don't we perform more contemporary music?” Someone remarked that it is too hard to sing, but that is not true. Most of the choirs in Germany try to sing Bach motets well and that is really difficult. It is much easier to sing a contemporary piece than to sing a Bach motet well.

That is what runs through my head because when I was singing, I said what have I learned? Are you good at anything? Yes, I could say. I know I am very good at singing Bach motets and I was very proud of it. At that time I was good at singing *Singet dem Herrn*, for instance, which is the most difficult one I think, in tempo and with full voice and with small voice and everything. I could do it. I was very happy about that. So I guess vocally for me all the melismas that are in Bach's music, and in Händel, of course, but more in Bach, as in the B-minor Mass, I could sing them, and I guess one could find some connection with it in *Villarosa*. You have to be in full control of your voice when you are singing structures. You have to have a connection with the flow in your breathing and so on. It is more difficult than you believe. It looks easy but it could be very hard, especially in intonation. You must keep it up all the time. There is a pre-study for this kind of music and that is called *Music for a Big Church for Tranquility*. Have you heard it?

Justin Hazelgrove: No, but I have read about it.

Thomas Jennefelt: It was performed in the States for the first time this autumn in Los Angeles by the Los Angeles Chorale. That is a piece that I wrote in some years before *Villarosa*. It was written in 1990 and just uses vowels. There was another piece called *Bön* that Gary Graden has recorded as well. It also has minimalistic repetition music with the Swedish text. I found out with *Music for a Big Church* that it is much easier to perform that kind of structure with text because it is not that tiring to sing. It gives you much broader possibilities to articulate or to use other kind of structures.

Justin Hazelgrove: In terms of the Baroque, it seems to me that much of *Villarosa* is constructed with ground bass with a monophonic voice above it. Is that an accurate assessment?

Thomas Jennefelt: Yes. There are different layers all the time. It is very easy to see them, of course. In this music, layers are key for me. You extend the inner layer and build it out to be a new layer. A connection still exists between them. In a way, it is very non-calculated. When, you start to imagine music that you want to write, it is very unclear for you. I think we all have different, very different ways to look at it. But to me, it often starts with a sound that I want to have. I have some vision of a sound that I have heard and I want to stay in that sound and see what I can get to, what kind of structures

come out of that sound. So, the sound is really very important. It is also very visual. It is very hard to explain, but I see the sound somehow, and not in notes, but in color. I have the time span in one direction, and then I have the sound in another. Most of this kind of music is like that. In another way, when I work with meaningful text, when I write opera, when I have a big text or something that I want to tell through the text, that is different. But most of the time, I have a vision of the sound that moves in layers and that is, of course, connected to the score. You follow the score and follow the timeline. This music is more instrumental than most choir music because you are thinking of layers, you are thinking of sound bursts. So this is more instrumental than vocal.

Justin Hazelgrove: For you, does the instrumental conception of the work draw another connection to Bach?

Thomas Jennefelt: Yes, definitely. One is looking for the “ur-cell,” the seed that is needed for something to grow. For me, the music that I can follow all through my own music is the beginning of Bach’s St. John Passion. I was sixteen and I had been playing piano and classical guitar, so I was, of course, accustomed to classical music in a normal way. My mother very interested in music and she was a singer. I liked classical music and I started singing in choir when I was sixteen. It went very quickly, and in the first year I was singing St. John’s Passion. I guess that has been my great influence all the time now from the beginning and I can hear it here. Most of my compositions are generated from that feeling of the first movement of the St. John Passion and one could go back in so many ways to that work. The theatrical aspect in my other music comes from that, too. To me, St. John’s Passion is a universe where I can get a lot of ideas and power to understand. Bach is so important to me. You have to catch a tone—as when I talk about sound—like Bach did. He was really careful when he did it, I think. He did not simply choose g minor by chance, but in g minor he could find the sounds and possibilities he wanted in each voice. He also had to capture the audience from the beginning because they would be listening for two hours.

I think of myself as the audience when I compose. I cannot imagine what other people think, but hopefully someone thinks as I do. The target is quite narrow. The beginning of Villarosa, for instance, contains some mystery, and it is also very simple, with oscillation between a minor and F major. It is important to find something that really hits you or moves you or drags you further into the composition. So the beginning is very important. That is the source again from which everything comes.

Villarosa was a commission from Finland. I was requested to write three pieces that would be performed at the same festival. I could not find any text, and that is how it started. It takes a great deal of time to find a text that you want to set to music. I decided instead to write my own text and that it did not need to have any meaning.

When the pieces were performed in Helsinki, I took note of the choirs’ movement to and from the stage, and I envisioned having several different choirs in circular formation, each singing a single movement. Therefore, I had to complete the formation with music. That is why Vinamintra Elitavi ends with the cluster that would allow Aleidi Floriasti to start again. That has never happened, but it is the original idea.

Justin Hazelgrove: I wondered what that particular connection was between movements.

Thomas Jennefelt: Yes, now you see. This could be made effective and it was made once by Gary Graden, but with the choir standing in the same place.

I said to myself that I wanted to write music so simple that anybody could have written it, but that no one had written before. That was more or less a motto for me. I was a bit afraid that it was too simple because there was conflict at that time when I was studying with teachers that were not impressed by my simplicity because contemporary music traditionally celebrates complexity. I was fighting against that complexity for myself. I do not dislike complex post-serial music, but I had no real possibility to make that kind of music myself. I did not have any emotional contact with that kind of thinking. Even if I use structures—of course I do—they must have input from Bach. They must say something musically from the beginning. Overall, it has been a struggle for simplicity and clarity, which has not been so easy. I have not felt comfortable in the surroundings, really. Of course, I am accepted as a composer in Sweden and many other places, but it is easier to be understood by the younger generation, like your generation, than it has been for me to be understood by my own generation. I now feel that older composers and I are becoming more connected, but my own generation is a little problematic, I think.

Justin Hazelgrove: I have read that the Monday Group's power over the musical environment here in Sweden was quite long lasting. Do you feel that remnants of that time period continue?

Thomas Jennefelt: No, I have always felt very close to them. The Monday Group with Ingvar Lidholm and Sven-Erik Bäck, they have been very happy in supporting me. Lidholm continues to support me and he is at least ninety-years-old. It is a very hard issue to describe actually because music has changed so much from the 70s when I started composing. The people that wrote very complex and serialistic music in the 70s and the 80s write more or less romantically now. I stick to my music. Sometimes I get back to my old pieces and I think I write the same music as I did. I try to see what connections there are to it. I think there are some with these. Villarosa is almost twenty years old now. At that time, no one listened to it in the field of new music.

Justin Hazelgrove: You mentioned layers. Do you feel that the principle of layers draws in the Steve Reich influence?

Thomas Jennefelt: In terms of sonority, it is definitely inspired by Steve Reich. When you look upon pure minimalistic music as that of Steve Reich, it is more an effect of increased complication and density. However, the drama and agogic phrasing in Villarosa would be impossible for Steve Reich. He would hate that. It does not work with the expression, which is based in structures. When you look at the work of Anton Webern

for instance, it is very structured. One can follow the twelve-tone row very exactly. He is still a very expressively romantic composer with agogic intent, and his work is played with agogic articulation. I am always considering the combination of dramatic music and minimalistic pattern music. That is one of my goals really: to combine those two contradictions, very pure structure and dramatic content. In all my music, what I want is dramaturgy to surprise the audience, the listener, to open new rooms. Those rooms have to be very clearly pronounced, so that one sees that it is a new room. I am sometimes very pedagogical in that sense, and that could be dangerous, of course, but I use it.

Justin Hazelgrove: You have mentioned your extensive singing experience in Swedish choirs. Is there anything that is specifically, chorally Swedish in terms of technical demands or aesthetic that one can trace in your music?

Thomas Jennefelt: Yes, there are. You are a bit familiar with the Swedish composers Stenhammar and Alfvén. You could take a piece of Alfvén, for instance, and find similarities. It is very beautiful and the sound is smooth. I do not know if it was sung that way all the time or if Eric Ericson has, through his music, sort of transformed it. It is difficult to say because there are no recordings that you could trust in how it sounded when Alfvén was performing it. You have just the good recordings from the 60s with Eric Ericson and his pupils. They could find the smooth sound. I have not discussed that so much with him. But, of course, if one just looks upon the actual sound achieved in Ericson's aesthetic, it is similar. I feel very strongly that I know how, as a singer, how I should form a particular vowel to sound that way, to sing together in the spectrum that gives that sound. I know how it feels to produce those wonderful sounds. Of course, that is a knowledge that is very important for me. There are very many connections with my idea of a way of singing, especially in the Villarosa pieces. Then I have really dramatic singing in the pieces with meaningful texts, like *Dichterliebe* and *Dixit*. So, I really have two sides in vocal music.

[Villarosa] is instrumental and connected to the Eric Ericson tradition because Eric Ericson is instrumental in his way of looking upon choral music. He has never been a text interpreter. He is more interested in the sound. I talked to him about it quite recently when we were talking about his piano playing. He was a very good pianist, and I remember that during rehearsals, when he could not really describe how we should sing, he sat down at the piano and played together with us. It came from his fingers and he played piano so smoothly. You can ask anyone that has heard him play. His vision of sound really comes also from the instrument.

Justin Hazelgrove: That is fascinating.

Thomas Jennefelt: There are instances of Baroque articulation [in Villarosa]. Eric spoke a lot of Bach, as did Nicholas Harnoncourt. The pulse gestures should be articulated in a bell-like fashion with attack and decay.

Justin Hazelgrove: Influenced by Baroque bowing, then?

Thomas Jennefelt: Bowing with a lot of air in it. You could use that as an example of how to use a minimalistic structure as a ground or even like an Alberti bass in the piano. It is not a big deal actually, but that is one important element, of course, those Baroque articulations.

I learned something also when I was studying electroacoustic music because then you look upon sound itself. I started to do that even before I wrote anything vocal of importance. I started in electronic music. And for me it was a very good starting point actually because you get very close to the sound and its vision. You could visualize the sound very clearly. You talk about an envelope, where you have the attack, the sustain, and the delay. It could be a very long or sustained sound, or the attack could be short and percussive. The ending of the sound could vary in the same manner. When I try to find proper consonants and proper vowels, I think in that way of the small envelope of sound. I want that smooth sound. The color of the vowels is so important. For instance, it has to be a light vocal. It could not be a dark vocal sound here [references the score]. When I put the text into it, the structures were already written so I just decided what kind of articulations I could use by singing the music myself. It really came from my own singing.

It would be impossible to write without Steve Reich, because I listened to him a great deal during his early years. That was really forbidden here in Sweden, I must say. And at that time in the 80s, again, when I was in New York I listened to very rough and hard electric guitar minimalists like Rhys Chatham and Glenn Branca. I attended concerts of electric guitarists playing minimal music close to the twin towers in the south where they had a landfill. There was a sandy beach and we were lying down and the sun was setting all over Manhattan and they were playing hard minimalistic music with electric guitars. The minimalistic music has been very important for me, but Steve Reich, more than any other, has the kind of sonority that I like, and simplicity and clarity are important words for me in all my music.

APPENDIX B

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May 7, 2012

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